

CEPPS
Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening



CEPPS Quarterly Report: July 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011

NEPAL: Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes
USAID Associate Cooperative Agreement No. AID-367-LA-10-00001, under the Leader
Cooperative Agreement No. DFD-A-00-08-00350-00

Project Dates: August 3, 2010 to August 31, 2015

IFES: Total budget: \$9,478,000 Expenses to date: \$1,912,532

NDI: Total budget: \$14,422,000 Expenses to date: \$2,293,140

Total budget: \$23,900,000 Expenses to date: \$4,205,672

This cover memorandum accompanies the detailed reports submitted by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) of the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for the “Nepal: Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes” program:

I. POLITICAL CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Nepal is undergoing a critical and historic period of political transition. The completion of the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections in April 2008 marked the beginning of the country’s course in drafting a new constitution and solidifying peace after a decade-long civil war. Major political stakeholders anticipate that the drafting process will lay out a new federal government structure more representative than the current centralized system.

However, the country’s political environment has become increasingly unstable and the constitution drafting process has been slow. The poor performance of political parties and the lack of consensus within parliament have fed the loss of public confidence in multi-party politics. Nepalis have characterized parties as being disconnected from citizen concerns outside of Kathmandu, unable to deliver on electoral campaign promises, and beset with corruption and opaque internal processes. In the CA, which acts as an interim parliament, negotiations of political arrangements have been difficult both in the aftermath of a socially and politically destabilizing

civil war. In addition, nearly a third of all members are new to elected office and lack the knowledge, skills and resources to fulfill their mandates. Civic engagement within the political process is uneven, and the culture of monitoring and holding political leaders accountable is underdeveloped.

After the adoption of a new constitution by the CA, elections will then be held to choose representatives to a successor legislature and new sub-national governance structures. The legitimacy of such institutions will be critical in managing tensions associated with diverse ethnicities, castes, and political groupings in Nepali society. This underscores the importance of an electoral process that is publicly viewed as credible and that involves the meaningful participation of voters and citizens. Effective public participation in these processes will be critical in determining the legitimacy of the new constitution, the government that is formed in its wake, and the future of country's political stability.

The CEPPS partners have identified the following challenges, organized by program component that will be addressed through this program:

Promote and Strengthen Broader Political Processes

- Organizational weaknesses and the poor governance record of Nepali political parties have led to a loss of public confidence in a multiparty system of democracy.
- Political parties lack internal democratic practices that encourage local party branches and members, including women youth and marginalized groups, to participate in the development of positions on policy issues.
- Political parties lack organized and transparent resource mobilization, and have difficulties in membership recruitment and retention.
- Political parties lack the institutional ability to formulate policy solutions and engage constituents and non-governmental stakeholders in public policy discussions.
- Organizational weaknesses have contributed to the parties' poor electoral preparation and performance. The lack of understanding of citizen concerns and priorities have resulted in party platforms and campaign strategies that were neither relevant nor compelling.
- In preparing for previous elections, candidate selection processes were not transparent, and candidates were not fully aware of their respective parties' policy positions.
- Political parties lack the capacity to plan and organize effective electoral campaigns, and are short on technical and practical resources to conduct campaigns in a competitive political environment.
- There is an underdeveloped culture within civil society and the media of monitoring the activities of political parties.

Strengthen Institutions Involved in Electoral Processes, Either as Actors or Participants

- While the CA election of 2008 was praised as a credible electoral process and well managed by the ECN, as expected in the first post-conflict election in a country with as many challenges as Nepal, there were shortcomings and irregularities in the electoral process (voter registration process, limitations of the voter education program, lack of a clear election disputes resolution mechanism).
- In an ongoing spirit of collaboration and transparency, in the post-election period, the ECN undertook a series of post-election evaluations with stakeholders at a national and

local level. During the coming years, it will be crucial to maintain the ECN's credibility and build on its institutional capacity to remain a strong pillar in Nepal's ongoing march from war to peace and from a monarchy to a Federal Democratic Republic.

- Although the 2008 general elections were mostly free of violence and administered without widespread problems, shortcomings in Nepal's election process persist, including: problems with the voter list and registration process; interference from some election and government officials; abuse of state resources for campaign purposes; and an inadequate process to resolve election complaints.
- Given the performance of civil society during previous elections, domestic monitoring groups and the media could play a stronger role in observing the elections and fostering greater transparency and fairness in the electoral process.

Improve the democratic functioning of the Constituent Assembly (CA)/Parliament

- Previous parliaments and the current Constituent Assembly have not been effective in their outreach and representation functions.
- There is a shortage of CA members with the technical expertise to draft and review proposed legislation.
- With the promulgation of the new constitution and the anticipated shift to a federal system of government, it is likely that many newly elected members will have little or no experience in serving as elected representatives.
- Key bodies within parliament institutions are understaffed and under-resourced. The Parliament Secretariat lacks adequate technical knowledge and material resources to effectively support the legislative process.
- The CA/Parliament conducts few committee hearings and does not have a formalized public consultation process. Little interaction exists between members of the CA/Parliament and their constituents, and this lack of interface breeds gaps in government responsiveness to citizen needs, citizen inclusion in public policy development and the accountability of officials and their use of public resources.
- There is little public information on the latest developments in the constitutional development process and the work of the legislature.

II. OBJECTIVES

The program aims to strengthen political parties, electoral and legislative processes in Nepal. To this end, IFES and NDI would be working to achieve the following specific objectives:

IFES

- Ensure that Nepal develops a body of legislation on the electoral process that is comprehensive, coherent and consistent; which conforms to international standards and suits the socio-economic context and new political realities of Nepal.
- Improve the capacity of the ECN to manage future elections and consolidate its mandate and performance through the provision of high level technical assistance in the legal, management and technical aspects of elections and long-term professional development capacity building
- Expand and improve the delivery of voter education by working with the ECN and selected non-governmental organizations to plan, develop, and implement effective voter education programs, with a focus on capacity building, in order to enhance the

electorate's understanding of democratic practices and rights, and increase participation in the electoral process.

- Closely monitor, analyze and report on the overall electoral process with a focus on the Election Commission's internal activities and external interaction with other electoral stakeholders.
- Provide a facility that can address unforeseen windows of opportunity that may arise in Nepal's unpredictable post-conflict political and electoral environment, in order to achieve immediate beneficial results in line with the program objectives.

NDI

- Promote and strengthen democratic political processes through political party development assistance.
Sub-Objective 1.A: Improve democratic political party organizational structures and operations
Sub-Objective 1.B: Enhance the electoral competitiveness of political parties
- Strengthen the capacity of citizen oversight of the electoral process.
Sub-Objective 2.A: Enhance the capacity of civil society to monitor elections
Sub-Objective 2.B: Strengthen the capacity of media to report on the electoral process
- Support the institutional strengthening of the Constituent Assembly/ Parliament and improve its capacity to address constituent needs.
Sub-Objective 3.A: Strengthen the legislative drafting capacity of the legislature
Sub-Objective 3.B: Increase communication between representatives and their constituents

III. ACTIVITIES

A. Promote and Strengthen Democratic Political Processes through Political Party Development Assistance

Effective Political Party Organizing and Outreach

NDI conducted two regional week-long training-of-trainers (ToT) sessions in Pokhara and Chitwan for 49 and 54 participants respectively. The curriculum focused on building the internal capacity of party training units. The ToTs covered five modules: public speaking, training and facilitation skills, conflict resolution, roles and functions of political parties in a democratic system, and working with party branches.

From July 16 to August 4, the Institute organized individual consultations between nine political parties and a visiting political party expert. These individual party consultations also formed the basis for subsequent workshops designed primarily on individual party needs. In total, nine individual party consultations and 12 individual workshops were conducted over the three weeks. Senior party leaders and central committee members participated in these workshops.

Cross Party Consensus Building

Inter Party Women's Alliance (IPWA) board members, along with an NDI representative, traveled to Terathum district, Eastern Development Region, for an IPWA district sub-committee formation and capacity building training. Following the district sub-committee formation in Terathum, IPWA, with logistical support from NDI, organized a three-day training program from September 15 to September 17 on "Constituent Assembly and Women Leadership Development." A total of 40 women activists participated in the three-day training program. The main objective of the program was to strengthen the ability of women to advocate for their rights during the constitution drafting process and to help IPWA chapters get recognition in their districts.

Building the Investigative Skills of Journalists to Monitor and Report on Party Activities

Internews conducted a series of ten-day journalism safety training courses across Nepal for approximately 60 participants. Participants were able to learn new tips on journalist safety and gain new resources into investigative work.

B. Strengthen Institutions Involved in Electoral Processes, Either as Actors or Participants

Technical Assistance to the ECN in the Legal, Management and Technical Aspects of Elections

IFES continued to provide technical and capacity building support to the ECN and other stakeholders focusing on: the amendment, amalgamation and synchronization of those segments of the electoral law so far drafted, which is on the electoral management body, campaign regulation, polling and counting, and electoral offences; and the development of an appropriate electoral system for Nepal. In addition to ongoing day-to-day technical advice to the ECN in the development of the draft political party law and draft segments of the electoral law, IFES has continued to liaise with NDI on the development of the political party law. Once the ECN reviews and releases the current draft of the political party law, it is likely to be made available for discussions and workshops through the NDI supported Inter Party Alliance.

Strengthen ECN's Electoral Management Capacity

Throughout this quarter, IFES continued to play a pivotal role in the implementation of the voter registration program, providing significant technical and capacity building support on a daily basis. In addition to IFES' strategic input, IFES' support has been crucial for the operational effectiveness of the voter registration process, particularly considering ECN's decision to allow eligible voters to register at any registration location and continuous voter registration.

IFES has continued to advise ECN members and staff that, from IFES estimates, there were significant numbers of potential registrants – as many as 5 to 5.5 million - who had yet to register. After recognizing that there are still some millions of people to register, the ECN decided to revisit all VDCs and municipalities, and reopen voter registration starting early November 2011, using Nepal Peace Trust Fund funding. IFES was immediately able to move to support the ECN in the implementation of this amended policy, specifically through continuing broadcast support for PSAs and the sub grants to CSOs for voter education support.

Capacity Building

IFES continued to take the lead coordination role, working with the ECN and its BRIDGE partners, UNDP and International IDEA, to plan for and implement BRIDGE activities. In this quarter IFES supported the development and/or implementation of: Training of Facilitators for 20 participants, mainly women; Introduction to Election Management for 23 new DEOs, BRIDGE tutorials for approximately 45- 50 ECN HQ staff.

In terms of organizational capacity building, IFES' country director and deputy country director continue to provide support on specific initiatives and through ongoing interactions with ECN staff. The national training consultant continues to maintain an excellent relationship with the ECN training team and is highly valued by the training team and senior ECN management. IFES played a significant role in shaping the structure and outcomes of the ECN's annual review process so that it focused on progress against strategic plan objectives.

In all of these areas the ECN has been receptive to this capacity-building support and IFES is continuing to see improvements in working practices and outputs in these areas. IFES, in conjunction with UNDP ESP, is still discussing with ECN an appropriate administrative capacity development program for ECN, including issues such as project and budget management, project proposal writing, negotiation, and operational planning.

Expand and Improve Delivery of Voter Education

The IFES team has maintained an excellent working relationship with the ECN voter education team and provided continuous capacity building support. A key focus of IFES' support this reporting period has been to work with the ECN to develop and produce a number of voter education products, including a single color A5 leaflet, and a full color A3-size gatefold voter registration Q&A brochure. IFES has also worked with the ECN on the design of a full color flipchart for use by DEOs and IFES CSO sub grantees in community voter education meetings. These products' messages highlight the continuous voter registration process and ECN's change in policy to enable eligible citizens to register at any registration location.

There has been a noticeable improvement in ECN staff's attitude to using more motivational and user friendly design in voter education materials. The ECN has encouraged IFES' CSO sub-grantees to use informal, local communication styles and clear designs in producing educational materials to support the ECN's voter registration program.

C. Support the Institutional Strengthening of the Constituent Assembly/Parliament and Improve its Capacity to Address Constituent Needs

Strengthening the Capacity of the Parliamentary Secretariat

Legislative Strengthening Program Senior Advisor Dr. Sherrie Wolff met with parliamentary committee chairs, party chief whips, and the Secretary General of the Legislature-Parliament Secretariat to discuss the Institute's effective committee workshop and parliamentary internship program. NDI listened to feedback and suggestions on the topics and content of the workshop,

and also briefed the committee chairs on the suggestions received during the Parliamentary Program Planning Workshop held in January 2011.

NDI then hosted an ‘Effective Committee Workshop’ in Kathmandu for the chairs, members, secretaries and other senior staff of six parliamentary committees. The workshop provided a comparative analysis of different government systems, and experts shared the law-making process under these three different models. Altogether, 46 participants attended the workshop.

TAF opened a new media center for the Secretariat within the Singha Durbar premises. TAF collaborated with Chemonics International Inc. to create the center and was in charge of the day-to-day oversight of the construction. TAF and Chemonics handed the keys of the media center to the Parliament Secretariat on September 15. As of the date of this report, TAF was discussing with the Secretary General a date for an inaugural event. TAF is also working to design and implement a system for the upkeep and sustainability of the media center with the Secretariat, including technical training and practical policies.

Promoting Dialogue Between Elected Members and Their Constituencies

The Institute conducted two community dialogue follow-up meetings in Kathmandu with the parliamentarians and the District Coordinators of 10 districts. The objectives of the meetings were to review the progress on the action plans prepared during the community dialogues and round table discussions held earlier in the year and to prepare an outline for upcoming activities at the central and local level with the help and involvement of the parliamentarians.

The Institute organized a seminar on “Unemployment in Nepal: Challenges and Solutions” for first-term parliamentarians. The seminar was a knowledge sharing and interaction event aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding of young parliamentarians on the issue of unemployment. Twenty-eight parliamentarians from seven political parties attended the seminar. NDI also organized an interactive program between the first-term parliamentarians of the Legislature-Parliament of Nepal and Hon. Emma Reynolds, MP, House of Commons, United Kingdom. The program focused on the topic, "National Foreign Policy/Affairs: Role of Parliamentarians.”

Supporting Greater Public Awareness and Engagement in the Work of Parliament

TAF continued to partner with the Nepal Constitution Foundation (NCF) to convene a broad coalition of five specific interest groups, which include Dalit, Madheshi, women, youth and *Janajati*, to conduct legislative audits. Eight bills were audited to study their compliance with international standards, legal and statutory coherence, and most importantly, whether or not the bills were inclusive towards marginalized groups. TAF also worked with its three local partners to conduct the third wave of youth- and women-focused town hall meetings to discuss specific legislative agendas in 45 municipalities across Nepal.

IV. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE INDICATORS

Foreign Assistance Indicators	IFES	NDI	Quarter Total	FY11 Total
Number of individuals who received USG-assisted political party training.	N/A	383	383	975
Number of domestic election observers trained with USG assistance.	N/A	0	0	0
Number of laws or amendments to ensure credible elections drafted with USG technical assistance	0 ¹	N/A	0	0
Number of USG-assisted public sessions held regarding proposed changes to the country's legal framework	0	N/A	0	6
Number of local CSOs strengthened that promote electoral reform and/or improvements in the electoral system.	0 ²	N/A	0	29
Number of electoral administration procedures and systems strengthened with USG assistance.	1	N/A	1	3
Number of electoral officials trained with USG assistance ³	60,236	N/A	60,236	88,199
Number of national legislators and national legislative staff attending USG sponsored training or educational events.	N/A	164	164	273
Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which national legislators and members of the public interact.	N/A	5	5	18

V. EVALUATION

Success Stories

The ECN, with the support of the BRIDGE partners in Nepal, is implementing one of the most active and innovative BRIDGE programs in the world. Technical sustainability is being maintained by training additional ECN and civil society facilitators, in the face of the problems caused by civil service rotation policies.

Due to IFES ability to respond quickly and effectively to ECN needs, IFES has continued to maintain excellent relationships and allies within the ECN with staff members remaining receptive to IFES' technical and capacity-building support. IFES will continue to build on this in the next quarter. There have been some significant advances in ECN thinking in the last quarter – particularly in relation to using the annual review workshop to review progress against strategic plan objectives, and in the conceptualization of voter education materials. More work is required to ensure that these become permanent advances.

¹ Indicator not yet applicable. No final observer reports have been issued.

² Figures by quarter are for unique organizations. Attendees in quarter 3 were the same that attended quarters 1 and 2.

³ The number of election officials trained during district level VR trainings, BRIDGE TtF and training series.

This quarter, the NDI successfully completed two rounds of regional political party training-of-trainers, in Pokhara and Chitwan respectively. The district level trainings provided a forum for 103 party activists from nine political parties (UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP, TMLP, SP, MJF-N, MJFN- R and CPN-ML) to work in unison for the duration of the training despite their political differences. An outstanding feature of the training in both districts was the spirit of camaraderie among party activists. The participants, despite their varying ideologies, were willing to listen and work together in a common forum to strengthen their respective parties. While the UCPN-M have only taken part in the Institute's programs for just one year now, they were supportive and actively participated in both events.

Lessons Learned

The ECN has now recognized that the business requirements of maintaining a continuous voter register are very different from those of managing a periodic register as in the past. It is commendable that ECN is now seeking advice on this, and has held the first of a series of consultations with international experts on a way forward. However it is not clear that the ECN secretariat realizes the extent of the work that still has to be done for a continuous voter registration system to be implemented, how this can be achieved by the time the initial data collection phase is completed by mid-next year, or the rate at which the accuracy and completeness of voter registration data so far collected will degrade. ECN will need to pay significantly more attention to continuous voter registration policies and planning over the following two quarters.

The follow-up meetings on community dialogues and round table discussions have highlighted the need for the parliamentarians to work on targets identified during the first round of these events in ten districts. While some districts have accomplished a lot in terms of effectively lobbying with concerned ministries and departments, the other districts are lagging behind. These follow-up meetings not only served as a reminder to the parliamentarians that time is running out but at the same time initiated their assurance to work on achieving their targets before the second round of dialogues.

Challenges

The ECN's voter registration focus has been on the field collection of data, the mechanics of which are proceeding relatively smoothly. Computer servers have been installed in all district offices and some staff trained how to use them; and the ECN's central computer processing center was near completion as at the end of the reporting period. However, the ECN has still not developed further business, operational or technical plans for the processing, amalgamation, verification and cleaning of the data collected, or its maintenance under a continuous voter registration system. There is as yet no available information on the completeness, accuracy or viability of the data on the 9.5 million voters so far collected.

Capacities of the ECN's IT staff remain in general low. As demands on the ECN's IT department increase as voter registration data is processed and maintained, IT department will require significant capacity building, potentially leading to significant international support to finalize and maintain the register.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Promote and strengthen democratic political processes through political party development assistance

- IPWA will expand its district committee in the final district and conduct capacity building training for the newly elected women members in that district.
- NDI, with support from international political party experts and consultants will conduct a series of individual political party workshops and consultations next quarter on key reform issues and priority areas identified by political parties.
- Internews will provide technical and management assistance ~~for~~ to the Antenna Foundation and the Federation of Nepalese Journalists, to continue the radio program, shows, workshops, media monitoring, and other programs the organizations are conducting.

Strengthen Institutions Involved in Electoral Processes, Either as Actors or Participants

- Review amalgamated and synchronized draft segments of the electoral law and facilitate ECN review and stakeholder discussion.
- Review ECN draft of election dispute resolution section of the electoral law.
- Provide technical and capacity building support to the ECN for the implementation of the continuous voter registration program.
- Support ECN's development of strategies and processes for public review of voter register data.
- Continue to provide technical, capacity building and material support to the ECN's voter education campaign for the ECN's revised voter registration program, including the development, production and broadcast of voter registration radio and TV PSAs.
- Continue the implementation of sub-grants with five local civil society organizations to facilitate the delivery of voter education campaigns in 26 districts for marginalized and less likely to register sectors of the population, in support of the ECN's intended re opening of voter registration places from November 2011 and the continuous voter registration process.
- Initiate processes to determine civil society organization sub grantees for delivery of voter education programs to support the ECN's intended continued voter registration drive in first quarter 2012 and possible public review of voter registers.

Support the Institutional Strengthening of the Constituent Assembly/Parliament and Improve its Capacity to Address Constituent Needs

- NDI will facilitate follow-up meetings of parliamentarians from respective districts with various ministries, departments and other public-private stakeholders ~~with involvement~~ on issues discussed during community dialogues and round table discussions. It is expected that this process will help obtain commitments from concerned agencies to address the district-specific issues at the policy level.

- NDI will organize a pilot public committee hearing in Kathmandu.
- NDI will organize a capacity building training on 'Parliamentary Procedures' for NGPG members and other parliamentarians to help enhance their knowledge and skills on presenting themselves effectively in parliamentary business.
- NDI will organize a seminar on deforestation for NGPG members and other parliamentarians to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the issue and solicit recommendations from experts.
- TAF will coordinate with the Secretary General to initiate strategic implementation of the Five-Year Library Improvement Plan, based on the recommendations provided by the research consultant and the funds allocated under CEPPS.
- TAF will operate in accordance to the work plan created by Writing Workshop to complete the Legislative Parliament's media center in the coming quarter. Coordinating with the Parliament Secretariat, it will initiate strategic involvement in providing technical and material assistance as identified by the research consultant and the funds allocated under CEPPS.
- TAF will continue to work closely with NCF and the interest group in identifying and auditing relevant legislation in the coming quarter. Furthermore, TAF will coordinate with New Spotlight Pvt. Ltd. to ensure a proper dissemination of the findings/recommendations of the interest group audits through the print media.
- TAF will continue to work with SS, WA, and RCDSC in conducting the next wave of town hall meetings. TAF will evaluate the effectiveness of the current selection of town halls and decide whether or not to make any changes for the following year.
- TAF will continue to work closely with Interface Nepal in identifying the relevant legislations and provide assistance in producing and broadcasting the weekly radio show.

International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)
July – September 2011, Quarterly Report
Total Budget: \$9,478,000 Expenses to date: \$1,912,532

I. SUMMARY

During this reporting period, the country experienced major shifts in government and peace process related activities. Jhala Nath Khanal, Communist Party of Nepal/Unified Marxist–Leninist (UML) Chairman, resigned from his post of Prime Minister (PM) on August 14, following immense pressure from other major parties. Efforts to form a consensus government failed due to Nepali Congress (NC) and Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (UCPN-M)'s failure to compromise on who should lead the government first. Eventually, the UCPN-M and the Madhes-based parties formed an alliance, based on a highly disputed 4-point agreement, and on August 28 voted for Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, UCPN-M vice chairman, as Nepal's PM, defeating NC's parliamentary party leader, Mr. Ram Chandra Paudel. On August 29, under PM Bhattarai's premiership, the Constituent Assembly voted for its third extension until November 30, 2011. The new cabinet is not fully formed yet, as NC and UML have stated that they will not join the government and participate in completion of the constitution writing, until the Maoist party completely sheds weapons and combatants. On the constitution writing front, there is still dispute over major electoral system and federal structure issues. By the end of the reporting period there had been little visible progress on the peace process and constitution writing, with the November 30 deadline fast approaching.

IFES technical assistance, capacity building, and material support has been crucial for the operational effectiveness of the voter registration process, particularly given ECN's decisions to: allow eligible voters to register at any registration location; extend voters registration in a number of districts from August 18 to November 16, 2011; revisit all village development committees (VDCs) and municipalities commencing November 2011 until February 2012; move ahead with continuous voter registration. ECN's 'laagat' form data suggests that an estimated over 5.0 million citizens still remain to be registered. IFES immediately moved to support the ECN's implementation of its amended policies to capture these 'missing' voters, through provision of technical assistance, capacity building and material support.

IFES supported the ECN's annual review against its strategic plan targets which will shape the ECN's program over the coming year. Support was provided to ECN for the development and production of 1,050,000 voter registration leaflets, and 61,000 voter registration Q&A brochures, and of 900 flipcharts to be used by voter educators and ECN offices; and the broadcast of a 30-second radio voter registration public service announcement (PSA) on local FM stations for one month and in four national FM networks for three months.

IFES is working with the ECN on how best to implement the continuous voter registration process, supporting both the development of appropriate business practices and plans and programs motivating and informing potential voters. Five CSOs were awarded sub grants through IFES to implement, from August 1 to December 31 2011, a voter education program in 26 districts, targeted to reach marginalized and less likely to register sectors of the population,

specifically, Kamaiya (freed bonded laborers), Rautes, Terai Dalits, youth and women. The program will be closely coordinated with the ECN re opening of voter registration places starting early November. All five CSOs have conducted training sessions for coordination and voter education staff, and, under the guidance of IFES and ECN, prepared print and other educational materials for dissemination. Plans for community meetings, household visits, public events and media programming to motivate and raise awareness about voter education have been prepared by all five CSOs, in close coordination with the relevant district election offices (DEOs), and implementation had commenced as at the end of the reporting period.

In addition to IFES' support for the voter registration process, IFES continued its ongoing programmatic work in other areas. IFES continued to provide technical and capacity building support to the ECN and other stakeholders for electoral law reform, focusing this quarter on the amendment, amalgamation and synchronization of segments of the electoral law so far drafted (on electoral management body, campaign regulation, polling and counting, and electoral offences); and on the development of an appropriate electoral system for Nepal.

IFES continued to take the lead coordination role, working with the ECN and its BRIDGE partners, UNDP and International IDEA, to plan for and implement BRIDGE activities. In this quarter IFES supported the development and/or implementation of: Training of Facilitators for 20 participants, mainly women; Introduction to Election Management for 23 new DEOs, BRIDGE tutorials for approximately 45- 50 ECN HQ staff. A Media and Elections BRIDGE workshop which IFES supported ECN to develop was cancelled by ECN at the last minute. IFES is also supporting the World Bank in implementing the new Democracy and Governance (DG) BRIDGE program in Nepal.

II. BACKGROUND

Political Updates

During this reporting period, Nepal experienced major shifts in government and peace process related activities. Jhala Nath Khanal, UML Chairman, resigned from his post of Prime Minister (PM) on August 14, following immense pressure from other major parties. Efforts to form a consensus government failed due to NC and UCPN-M's failure to compromise on who should lead the government first. Eventually, the UCPN-M and the Madhes-based parties formed what is termed an 'unnatural alliance', based on a highly disputed four-point agreement, and voted on August 28 for Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, UCPN-M vice chairman, as Nepal's PM, defeating NC's parliamentary party leader, Mr. Ram Chandra Paudel. On August 29, under PM Bhattarai's premiership, the Constituent Assembly voted for its third extension - until November 30, 2011, to complete the constitution writing and peace process.

On September 1, PM Bhattarai handed over keys of arms containers to the Special Committee (SC). The hardliner Baidya faction of the UCPN-M denounced this and termed it 'suicidal' for the Maoist party. In retaliation, the Baidya faction has refused to join the Cabinet, further complicating the peace and constitution writing process.

In his new cabinet, PM Bhattarai has so far appointed Bijay Gachchadar, from SLMM – Madhes party alliance, as the new home minister and Deputy PM and Narayan Kaji Shrestha, from UCPN-M, as the new foreign minister and deputy PM. Of the 22 ministerial portfolios assigned so far, the Madhes party alliance has received 12 to date. One of Minister Gachchadar's first moves was to transfer the Secretary of the Home Ministry, Lila Mani Paudel to the Prime Minister's Office, replacing him with Sushil Jung Rana, a former secretary at the ECN who served during the Constituent Assembly elections.

Despite urgings by PM Bhattarai and UCPN –M Chairman Dahal, NC president Sushil Koirala, and UML Chairman Khanal, have told the Maoist leaders that the NC and UML will not join the government and participate in completion of the constitution writing, until the Maoist party completely sheds weapons and combatants. Meanwhile NC itself has been rocked by the unilateral dissolution by NC President Koirala of four NC 'sister' organizations, including the youth and women's wings, led by protégés of Koirala's rival Sher Bahadur Deuba.

On the constitution writing front, there is still dispute over major electoral system and federal structure issues. On forms of governance, Dahal, head of the dispute resolution taskforce, proposed a system with the president as head of state and the prime minister as head of government. On the electoral system, he proposed a mixed electoral system similar to that used for the Constituent Assembly election. On state restructuring, the parties, including NC which has all along been opposing formation of the commission on state restructuring, are likely to agree on forming an experts' panel that would recommend a federal model to be adopted in the new constitution.

On August 7 ECN decided to extend voters registration in 15 districts (3 in the Kathmandu valley and 12 in other urban areas) for another 2 months, in ECN office locations. They also decided to continue the voter registration centers at 19 District Administration Offices and establish them at 26 area administration offices in 24 districts from August 18, 2011 to November 16, 2011. On September 20, the ECN decided to revisit all VDCs and municipalities, commencing November 2011, for a four-month voter registration program, using Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) funding. The periods of operation and locations of registration places have not yet been finalized. A suggestion being considered is that they may open for between 2-9 days at each location depending on the estimated number of voters remaining to be registered.

The ECN conducted a national and five regional annual review sessions, where they reviewed their progress against their 2009-2013 Strategic Plan, in the second week of August. At this review, ECN discussed data on voters enumerated and registered, including data on "out of district registration". While the enumeration data is flawed, it is the best available. Overall analysis of the data indicates that registration take up has been most effective in the Terai. Overall 59.4percent percent of those who could potentially register have registered: 69percent percent in the Terai, 51percent percent in the hills and 59percent percent in the Himalaya region. Extrapolating for data gaps, it can be estimated that around 2.5 million do not have citizenship certificates, around 1.6 million are internal migrants, and that of those enumerated between 800,000 to 1 million have not registered; around 2+ million are out of country. From these rough extrapolations, total potential registrants are between 14.5 to 15 million, of whom 9.5 million have registered during the past 12 months of registration.

On September 16, the Constitutional Council (CC) endorsed a working procedure for appointment of heads and members of constitutional bodies through open competition. The new appointments to the constitutional bodies including Election Commission, have been stalled for years due to differences among political parties over sharing of the positions.

Program Objectives

Under the Consortium of Elections and Political Strengthening (CEPPS III), IFES activities aim to support one of the three principal objectives as detailed by USAID2) Strengthen Institutions Involved in Electoral Processes, Either as Actors or Participants and sub-objectives:

- A) Strengthen democratic legal framework
- B) Strengthen the ECN's electoral management capacity and
- C) Expand and improve delivery of voter education

In support of the above, IFES will achieve the following objectives:

- To ensure that Nepal develops a body of legislation on the electoral process that is comprehensive, coherent and consistent; which conforms to international standards and suits the socio-economic context and new political realities of Nepal.
- To improve the capacity of the ECN to manage future elections and consolidate its mandate and performance through the provision of high level technical assistance in the legal, management and technical aspects of elections and long-term professional development capacity building.
- To expand and improve the delivery of voter education by working with the ECN and selected non-governmental organizations to plan, develop, and implement effective voter education programs, with a focus on capacity building, in order to enhance the electorate's understanding of democratic practices and rights, and increase participation in the electoral process.
- To closely monitor, analyze and report on the overall electoral process with a focus on the Election Commission's internal activities and external interaction with other electoral stakeholders.
- To provide a facility that can address unforeseen windows of opportunity that may arise in Nepal's unpredictable post-conflict political and electoral environment, in order to achieve immediate beneficial results in line with the program objectives.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. Strengthening Democratic Legal Framework

Summary: During this reporting period, IFES has continued to provide technical and capacity building support to the ECN and other stakeholders focusing on: the amendment, amalgamation and synchronization of those segments of the electoral law so far drafted, that is on the electoral management body, campaign regulation, polling and counting, and electoral offences; and the development of an appropriate electoral system for Nepal.

IFES' two programs for electoral law reform, one funded under USAID/CEPPS III and the other funded by the Norwegian government, continue to collaborate closely to maximize coordinated technical inputs and public discussion and review opportunities. On August 16, 2011 the Norwegian government extended its support for IFES's electoral law reform program to December 31, 2012, and provided an additional Kroner 3,000,000 (currently around \$US520,000) in funding. On August 19, 2011, IFES renewed the subcontract with IFES' Norwegian-funded consultant, Kare Vollan, to the same date. The IFES country director and Mr. Vollan have worked in tandem during the quarter to provide advice to ECN and its stakeholders on the drafts of the political party law and electoral law, and electoral legal reform issues in general.

In mid-July 2011, the Nepali legal drafter engaged to draft the electoral laws under IFES' Norwegian funding returned to the Nepali civil service, and was seconded to the legal department of ECN. However, drafting the new electoral laws is now only part of his duties: consequently the amalgamation and synchronization of existing drafts and drafting of additional segments of the law that can be done before a constitutional settlement has fallen behind schedule. To address this, from mid-October IFES will, from its Norwegian funding, engage the former Secretary of the Justice Department, Madhab Prasad Paudel, to draft the election dispute resolution segment of the laws, under the guidance of ECN, IFES country director and Mr. Vollan.

During the current reporting period IFES country director provided the ECN with detailed comments on its drafts of the campaign regulation, electoral management body and polling and counting sections of the law, and further comments on the draft political party law, which were substantially included in revised drafts. IFES has supported and advised ECN on the finalization of the outline of the electoral law: it is envisaged that constitutionally dependent segments (e.g. on electoral system, party/individual candidacy and result determination) will be dealt with in a separate module for each type of election to be held. At the end of this reporting period, IFES support has enabled the electoral management body, campaign regulation, polling and counting, definitions and electoral offences segments to be amalgamated and synchronized in a Nepali version. IFES is awaiting an English translation for review and discussion with ECN early in the next quarter.

Through its Norwegian funding and supported with technical advice from the IFES country director/senior election advisor, IFES has continued to engage stakeholders in discussions on appropriate electoral systems for Nepal. IFES has paid specific attention to the issue of quotas

for various groups, and has suggested means by which electoral quotas may be simplified. Discussions with individual senior political leaders continued throughout the quarter through the Norwegian funded program; revised papers on electoral systems issues were discussed with them; and from September 23-27 four small workshop were held in Kathmandu: two with senior party leaders from the main parties (the second attended by the acting Chief Election Commissioner), one with Janajatis and one with the Dalit National NGO Federation.

IFES has continued to liaise with NDI on the development of the political party law. It is expected that once the ECN reviews and releases the current draft of the political party law, it will be made available for discussions and workshops through the NDI supported Inter Party Alliance.

Results: Ongoing day-to-day technical advice to the ECN in the development of the draft political party law and draft segments of the electoral law. Revisions to draft electoral laws that more closely align them with international electoral standards. Political party consideration of IFES advice on appropriate electoral systems and simplified electoral quotas. Amalgamation and synchronization of the election law segments on campaign regulation, EMB, electoral offences and polling and counting.

Activity 1.2 – Capacity Building

Summary: IFES has used day-to-day discussions with ECN staff and meetings with political party and civil society stakeholders to provide information on international examples of good practice in electoral legal frameworks, and to increase stakeholders' knowledge of and trust in simplified electoral legal and system frameworks.

IFES review of the ECN's drafts of the electoral law segments has been used to enhance the ECN legal department's knowledge of international good practices in electoral law, with substantial emphasis on the regulation of electoral campaigns. In meetings with individual party leaders and in end-September workshops with parties and civil society groups, IFES has guided increased understanding of electoral systems and the impacts of their components. As a result of this information, party leaders are beginning to focus discussions on a simplified yet potentially more representative electoral system for Nepal, using a parallel system including province based lists.

Results: Increased knowledge of the ECN's legal department, civil society and political party stakeholders of international good practices in legal frameworks for political parties and elections, particularly in relation to campaign regulation. Consideration by political parties of simplified electoral system and electoral quota frameworks.

2. Strengthening Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN

Activity 2.1 – Technical Assistance

Summary: During this quarter, IFES continued to play a pivotal role in the implementation of the voter registration program, providing significant technical and capacity building support on a

daily basis. In addition to IFES' strategic input, IFES' support has been crucial for the operational effectiveness of the voter registration process, particularly considering ECN's decision to allow eligible voters to register at any registration location and continuous voter registration.

During this reporting period, IFES was able to obtain current data for all districts, except Bajura, on all participants trained by ECN since March 2011 on voter registration, using IFES materials (enumeration handbook, registration handbook, trainers' guide, registration video). The data reveals that 84,355 personnel were trained using these materials, of which 62,958 are ECN staff and 21,397 are members of local support and coordination committees, of whom 19,888 (24percent) were women. Women comprised over 30percent of enumerators and around 30percent of computer operators trained.

During the quarter IFES continued to advise ECN members and staff that, from IFES estimates, there were significant numbers of potential registrants – as many as 5 to 5.5 million - who had yet to register, and that it was essential that ECN reopen registration places to deal with this, and press for special measures for citizenship certificate issue and out of district registrants. ECN was unwilling to take significant action without more concrete evidence of numbers remaining to register, especially until new financial year funding was assured. In early August, ECN determined temporary measures for continuing the voter registration program, in 75 district election offices and 19 district administration offices until November 16, 2011 and in voter registration centers opened in 26 sub-district administration offices in 24 districts from August 18 to November 26, 2011.

From the data compiled in August by ECN from enumerators' 'laagat' forms, it became evident that over 5 million people remain to be registered. IFES provided an analysis of the data compiled from the laagat forms to ECN, identifying potential errors in the data (and their likely causes), and districts where data indicated that special registration measures may need to be taken.

After recognizing that there are still some millions of people to register, on September 20 the ECN decided to revisit all VDCs and municipalities, and reopen voter registration starting early November 2011, using NPTF funding. The registration places and periods of operation have not yet been finalized. IFES is providing advice to ECN on issues to consider when determining places and periods of operation, especially taking into account citizenship certificate issues. However, it appeared that ECN considered re open registration centres for short periods only: possibly for 2-9 days depending on the estimated number of voters remaining to be registered.

IFES was immediately able to move to support the ECN in the implementation of this amended policy, specifically through continuing broadcast support for PSAs and the sub grants to CSOs for voter education support (see Section 3: *Expanding and Improving the Delivery of Voter Education*).

IFES joined with UNDP Election Support Project (ESP) at the ECN workshop on Continuous Voter Registration on September 21, to assist the ECN with a framework for developing its business model for continuous registration. It was evident that this was the first time that many

of the ECN officials present had seriously considered the many ramifications of the continuous voter registration system chosen by the ECN 18 months ago. The advice IFES provided at this workshop and in frequent meetings with relevant secretariat officials during this quarter is shaping the ECN's approach to its continuous voter registration business model, operational and IT procedures and data requirements. Additional events, guided by IFES and UNDP ESP, will be required for ECN to operationalize its full model for continuous registration.

The ECN's decision, during the reporting period, to return to municipalities and VDCs for a further registration drive, and its commencement of planning an operational structure for its continuous voter registration program are positive, if somewhat belated, further steps towards creating a credible voter register. While a start has been made on planning the management of the voter registration database, IFES and UNDP ESP continue to have serious concerns about the progress in planning for this and the current lack of capacity in ECN's IT department to manage the ECN's soon to be completed central data processing centre, and its regional and district based data processing operations. IFES continues to offer support to ECN for the training of its staff in voter registration data management – particularly for data amalgamation, verification and cleaning - which will now hopefully take place during the next quarter. Effective management of data will be pivotal to the success of the new voter register and future election management.

Results: Provision of ongoing high-level technical guidance and assistance with the voter registration process and associated training plans and materials and voter education products. ECN's consideration of the practical measures needed to implement continuous voter registration. Influence on ECN decision to revisit municipalities and VDCs for a renewed voter registration drive. Support for the ECN's development of implementation plans for the reopening of registration places through to February 2012.

Activity 2.2 – Capacity Building

a) Implementing a Program of Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) Training

Summary: IFES continues to take the lead coordination role, working with the Commission and its BRIDGE partners, UNDP and International IDEA, to plan for and implement BRIDGE activities, specifically in this quarter: Training of Facilitators, Introduction to Election Management, and Media and Elections workshops and BRIDGE tutorials.

The *Election* BRIDGE training the facilitators, as described in detail in the last quarterly report, finished on July 8 with a closing ceremony for the 20 participants from ECN, civil society organizations, National Staff College and countries from the region, presided over by the Acting Chief Commissioner and the ECN Secretary. The ECN was extremely supportive of this training of facilitators program. Six facilitators part-accredited at this workshop have been identified as priorities to receive full accreditation, including two facilitators from ECN. It is intended that these facilitators will obtain full accreditation during the Gender and Elections BRIDGE pilot and regional workshops to be held between October and December 2011.

IFES worked with the ECN to develop the curriculum, materials, and logistics, and funded the Introduction to Election Management BRIDGE workshop for new District Election Officers, held in Dhulikel on August 18-20, 2011. Twenty-three new DEOs participated. The facilitation team included IFES country director and national training advisor. Feedback from the new DEOs was extremely positive, with requests for additional in-depth training on technical issues such as electoral systems and ECN administrative procedures. The training proved highly effective: the 16percent average score for the pre workshop questionnaire compared to 69percent for the post workshop questionnaire.

During September, IFES supported the ECN in identifying participants and preparing the curriculum, materials and logistics for a planned BRIDGE workshop on Media and Elections, scheduled for September 26 and 27. ECN invited 23 senior media executives from print, radio and television media and two new ECN secretariat staff to participate. IFES assisted ECN in adapting the standard BRIDGE materials to a media, rather than EMB, perspective and also assisted in translating these materials. While the A/g Chief Election Commissioner had approved the workshop, the ECN determined and notified IFES on cancellation of the training. The senior media officials invited were advised of the cancellation by ECN on September 25.

At the end of the reporting period IFES national training advisor and BRIDGE administrative assistant have been supporting UNDP ESP and ECN in the preparation the UNDP- funded pilot of the new BRIDGE Gender and Elections module, to be held in Kathmandu on October 12-14. On September 29, ECN unilaterally increased the number of ECN staff being involved as facilitators at this workshop, and arranged for the Commission members to attend opening and closing ceremonies.

IFES has continued to take a lead role in supporting the World Bank in the implementation of a pilot program in Nepal on the new Democracy and Governance (DG) BRIDGE program. A DG BRIDGE stakeholder meeting was held at the World Bank on August 15, attended by World Bank, Pro Public, Samuhik Abhiyan, IFES, UNDP, Danida, and AEC. The draft DG BRIDGE Nepal strategy was discussed and some modifications requested to the proposed inflexible course length, and the mechanisms for funding local projects emanating from DG BRIDGE workshops. The pilot DG BRIDGE workshop held last quarter in Doti is being followed up with a 3-day action planning workshop. The program will be reviewed following a further pilot, probably in Dang, in last quarter 2011, a Training of Facilitators held in December 2011, with a full roll out envisaged in 2012. DG BRIDGE workshops will be primarily funded by World Bank; however it is seeking support from other donors. IFES will continue to provide technical advice to the DG BRIDGE program; and facilitation support, once a local staff member receives facilitation training.

During this reporting period, IFES supported two, half-day, BRIDGE tutorial sessions for 20-25 ECN staff per tutorial. The number of tutorials was significantly reduced from that planned due to other ECN activities limiting staff availability. During September, the IFES National Training Advisor commenced supporting ECN to develop content for tutorial sessions based on BRIDGE methodology be held for lower level HQ support staff, to provide them with basic information about the structure and functions of the ECN. These sessions are expected to be held in

November 2011. The ECN is considering extending these sessions to non-gazetted staff in its district offices.

Results: Completion of the ten-day women-focused *Train the Facilitator* BRIDGE program, for 20 participants. Preparation and implementation of a three-day BRIDGE Introduction to Election Management program, resulting in significantly increased knowledge in the 23 new DEOs who participated. Two-day curriculum and materials prepared for a BRIDGE Media and Election program. Two half-day BRIDGE tutorial sessions provided for ECN HQ staff.

b) Organizational Capacity Building

Summary: IFES' country director and deputy country director continue to provide organizational capacity building support on specific initiatives and through ongoing interactions with ECN staff. The national training consultant continues to maintain an excellent relationship with the ECN training team and is highly valued by the training team and senior ECN management. IFES played a significant role in shaping the structure and outcomes of the ECN's annual review process so that it focused on progress against strategic plan objectives.

IFES national training advisor provided capacity building support to ECN in the development of the framework and DEO reporting formats for the ECN's regional annual review meetings conducted in five regions on August 10 and 11, and the national annual review meeting conducted on August 14-16. IFES co-funded the national event with UNDP-ESP. At IFES' instigation, the reporting formats required each district office and HQ section to report on its progress against the relevant objectives in the ECN's 5-year strategic plan, and the review workshops agendas were based on assessment and forward planning against these objectives. This was a significant breakthrough compared to past ECN annual reviews, which lacked this focus. Comments from a number of participating DEOs indicated that they for the first time they had some ownership in the ECN's planning processes. The ECN completed its first draft of the report on the annual review meetings in the last week of September. IFES will review the report and subsequent discussions will be held with ECN on assistance required to implement its recommendations in the coming quarter.

IFES has also provided capacity building support with the ongoing development of voter education materials for the voter registration process. IFES has worked with the BRIDGE team and ECN training and education staff on the development and implementation of the Introduction to Election Management, Media and Elections, and Gender BRIDGE programs, BRIDGE tutorial sessions and completion of 10-day Training of Facilitators program. In all of these areas the ECN has been receptive to this capacity-building support and IFES is continuing to see improvements in working practices and outputs in these areas. IFES, in conjunction with UNDP ESP, is still discussing with ECN an appropriate administrative capacity development program for ECN, including issues such as project and budget management, project proposal writing, negotiation, and operational planning.

Results: More professional approaches to developing training and education programs and materials. Organized and fruitful completion of the two-day, regional and national, annual review meetings and annual review draft report. Wider staff ownership of ECN's planning processes.

3. Expanding and Improving the Delivery of Voter Education

Activity 3.1 *Capacity Building Support to the ECN on the Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Voter Education Campaign*

Summary: The IFES team has continued to maintain an excellent working relationship with the ECN voter education team and provided continuous capacity building support. A key focus of IFES' support this reporting period has been to work with the ECN to develop and produce a number of voter education products, including a single color A5 leaflet, and a full color A3-size gatefold voter registration Q&A brochure. IFES has also worked with the ECN on the design of a full color flipchart for use by DEOs and IFES CSO sub grantees in community voter education meetings. These products' messages highlight the continuous voter registration process and ECN's change in policy to enable eligible citizens to register at any registration location.

Following a request from the A/g Chief Election Commissioner and ECN Secretary, during the quarter IFES commenced preparatory work for a full re-design of the ECN's website to broaden its scope for external information provision and internal use, provide more accessible information and provide interactive features. However, as at the end of the reporting period, opposition from the ECN's IT department to anything more than an update of the materials on the existing site, using funds budgeted from the ECN's NPTF allocation, has meant there has been no progress past the preparatory stage. ECN's IT department is rightly concerned that the website be sustainable, a concern that IFES shares and will be the basis of any IFES involvement in supporting the ECN IT department's capacities to redevelop and maintain the ECN website.

During this quarter there has been a noticeable improvement in ECN staff's attitude to using more motivational and user friendly design in voter education materials. The A3 gatefold brochure developed and produced with IFES support during the quarter is a significant improvement on the design and content demanded by ECN for the initial version of the brochure produced by ECN in mid-2010. The ECN has encouraged IFES' CSO sub-grantees to use informal, local communication styles and clear designs in producing educational materials to support the ECN's voter registration program.

However, the ECN's natural inclination can still be to use traditional complex language and messaging styles in draft public information materials. Due to the last minute nature of many of the ECN's requests for materials, such as requests for continuing to re-broadcast the radio PSAs, IFES has been limited in its ability to fully address this issue.

Further changing the ECN's approach to using more motivational, user friendly language in public information materials, and take advantage of a wider range of public information opportunities, continues to be a long term priority area for IFES' work with the ECN. IFES will also continue to strongly promote the issue of inclusion and representation of women and marginalized groups in the ECN's public information work.

Results: Ongoing provision by IFES staff on voter education capacity building support and excellent working relationship maintained with the ECN voter education team. Specific capacity

building support provided for the development of a single color A5 leaflet, full color A3 size gatefold voter registration Q&A brochures, and full color flipcharts to promote the continuous voter registration process and ECN's new policy decision to allow citizens to register at any registration location. Support for development of a draft new radio PSA.

Activity 3.2 Material and Broadcasting Support for Voter Education Campaigns

Summary: During this quarter, IFES continued to work with the ECN on its voter education activities developed during the previous reporting period. With IFES support, 1,050,000 A5 size single colour leaflets and 61,000 A3 size gatefold Q&A brochures were produced for the ECN's voter education campaign, along with 900 flipcharts for use by DEOs and voter educators. IFES is also continuing to support the broadcasting of a 30 second radio PSA, developed during the last reporting period, on four national FM's, and supported the same in broadcasts in 16 local languages until end July.

Of the print materials produced with IFES support, the bulk will now be disseminated by ECN in conjunction with the reopening of registration places now scheduled for the November 2011 to February 2012 period: 1,000,000 leaflets, 50,000 brochures and 170 flip charts will be distributed through District Election Offices at this time. The remainder of the materials will be used by IFES' five CSO sub grantee partners in their voter education activities (see *Activity 3.3* below). Ensuring high quality of printed products at an economic cost remains a significant challenge, due to the age and lower technical capacities of the machinery used by Nepali printers. In spite of this, ECN has continued to be extremely pleased with the quality of the products produced with IFES' support.

While IFES has continued to support the broadcast of the ECN's radio PSA throughout the quarter, maintaining a continuous radio presence has been made more difficult by the ECN requesting this support on a month by month basis, generally with a very short lead time. Now that the ECN has a concept through to February 2012 for its voter registration program, IFES will be endeavoring to persuade and assist ECN to develop a voter education plan, including for radio broadcasting, for this whole period.

At end July, IFES and ECN changed the strategy for radio PSA placements. Until then PSAs were broadcast in 17 languages, with Nepali language PSAs broadcast nationally on 4 networks and local language PSAs being broadcast through individual local FM stations affiliated to two of these networks. IFES monitoring showed that compliance with the agreed broadcast schedules was good for the Nepali language broadcasts, but was generally poor for local language broadcasts, due to network management problems, leading to complicated negotiations for compensatory airtime. Thus, at end July the local language PSA broadcasts were suspended.

To provide some effective local language PSA broadcasting, IFES has been examining the feasibility of contracting its five CSO sub grantees and their affiliates (see *Activity 3.3* below) to buy airtime for PSAs in local languages on local FM stations in the districts in which they are conducting voter education programs, and monitor their broadcast. Three of the five appear to have the capacity to do this: negotiations with them had not been finalised as at the end of the reporting period.

Results: Support for the production of 1,050,000 voter registration leaflets, 61,000 voter registration brochures and 900 voter educator flipcharts. Support for the broadcast of a 30-second radio PSA, developed during the last reporting period, on four national FM networks. Support for the broadcast of a 30 second PSA in 16 local languages on local affiliate stations of two FM networks until end July.

Activity 3.3 Sub grants to selected NGOs to develop and Deliver Voter Education Efforts

Summary: By late July five CSOs were awarded sub grants to implement, from August 1 to December 31 2011, a voter education program in 26 districts, targeting marginalized and less likely to register sectors of the population, specifically Kamaiya (freed bonded laborers), Rautes, Terai Dalits, youth and women. The program is closely coordinated with the ECN's initiative to re-open voter registration places in early November. As at the end of the reporting period all five CSOs have conducted training sessions for coordination and voter education staff, and, under the guidance of IFES and ECN, prepared print and other educational materials for dissemination. Plans for community meetings, household visits, public events and media programming to motivate and raise awareness about voter education have been prepared by all five CSOs, in close coordination with the relevant District Election Offices, and implementation had commenced at end quarter.

Responding to a request from ECN earlier in 2011, during the previous quarter IFES conducted a rigorous selection process for the award of sub grants to selected CSOs to motivate and inform marginalized and less likely to register groups about voter registration. Following USAID approval in July 2011, sub grants were signed with the following five CSOs: Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Association (NNDSWO) - \$30,076; Dalit National NGO Federation (DNF) - \$31,323; Nepal National Social Welfare Association – (NNSWA) – \$24,319; Janaki Women Awareness Society (JWAS) - \$24,824 and Youth Initiative (YI) - \$24,416. Each is working in selected VDCs in between 5 and 9 districts, in the Far West region and across the Terai. Key concepts of the project are that activities are implemented by local affiliate organizations that are well known and accepted at the local level, not directly from Kathmandu; and that implementation is being very closely coordinated with the DEO in each of the districts covered, to assist the ECN in targeting its voter registration efforts. A summary of the sub grantees' planned coverage is tabulated below.

CSO	Number of Districts *	Number of VDCs/ Munic.	Number of Education Workshops/Home Visits		Number of Leaflets	Number of Radio Programs & PSAs	Number of Street Theatre Events	Number of School Visits (minimum)	
			Voter Educator Training						Household Visits/ Community Meetings: Number and Participants
			W'shops	Participants					
NNDWSO	9	108	475	9500	3770 events 73400 part	100,000		108	
DNF	9	180	180	3600	3660 events 18900 h/hold 109800 part.	100,000			180
NNSWA	5	50	1	13	395 event 13000 h/hold 60200 part.	100,000	1 PSA 25 programs on 5 stations	20	
JWAS	5	190	13	260	1520 events 95000 h/hold 257840 part.	100,000			
YI	7	7	8	80	400 events 26400 part.	50,000	1 PSA, on 8 stations, for 60 days		800
TOTAL	26	535	677	13453	9685 events 128000 h/hold 506,900 part.	450,000		128	980

*Programs overlap in some districts

The districts in which each of the CSO sub grantees are operating are as follows:

NNDWSO	DNF	NNSWA	JWAS	YI
Kailali	Dang	Dang	Mahottari	Dang
Kanchanpur	Banke	Banke	Dhanusha	Banke
Dardelhura	Siraha	Bardia	Sindhuli	Kailali
Darchula	Saptari	Kailali	Sarlahi	Morang
Bajhang	Mahottari	Kanchanpur	Bara	Dhanusha
Accham	Rautahat			Chitwan
Baitadi	Nawalparashi			Kaski
Doti	Rupendehi			
Bajura	Surkhet			

A four-day residential orientation workshop, for three key staff from each of the five CSOs was held in Kathmandu, from August 2 – 5. The program included presentations from IFES DC Contracts and Grants staff, and two days of highly interactive work on the specific operational and financial responsibilities under the ToRs of their sub grant agreements with IFES. Required M&E and reporting formats were extensively covered. Post training evaluations showed that all participants found the training overall to be a useful capacity building exercise. By end August each CSO had conducted the first level training for its key district coordination staff, covering the voter registration process, voter education tools and methodology to be used, reporting formats, M&E functions, and the development of district level action plans for the project. IFES and District Election Office staff participated in presenting this training. Training for field level voter educators was finalised by end September.

Throughout the quarter IFES worked with the CSOs and ECN to develop suitable materials for use in the CSOs' voter education activities. The design of a flipchart, for use by CSO voter

educators at community meetings and household visits, which explains in simple graphics the voter registration process, had commenced in the previous quarter. Subsequently, the content was finalised and ECN approval obtained: 650 flipcharts have been produced and distributed by IFES to the CSOs' voter educators. A further 170 flipcharts have been produced, at ECN's request, for use by their DEOs.

In August, IFES distributed a total of 11,00 copies of the Q&A brochure, and 50,000 copies of the voter registration information leaflet, developed by ECN with IFES support, to the five CSOs. Three CSOs – NNDSWO, NNSWA and DNF - have decided to use the ECN leaflet as their standard leaflet and by end September had organized local printing of initial quantities. Both JWAS and YI have, with significant IFES support, developed their own leaflets targeting youth and women respectively, with the JWAS leaflet being developed in Nepali and two local languages – Maithili and Bhojpuri. Initial quantities of these leaflets had been produced locally by these CSOs by end September. IFES also has worked with NNDSWO and NNSWA to refine their proposed street theatre scripts so that they were finalised by end September. Scripts for YI and NNSWA's PSAs were developed with IFES support and also finalised by end September. YI has used popular local band Kutumba for its PSA: on the band's return from the USA, IFES will use this opening to encourage Kutumba to publicize voter registration at its concerts. At the CSOs' request, at end September IFES has provided them with 750 tote bags, carrying a voter registration slogan, for the voter educators to use to carry their materials.

The A/g Chief Election Commissioner made it clear that, while this project is being implemented in close coordination with the ECN, it was up to the CSOs to determine appropriate language and communication styles for their voter education materials for their communities. The secretariat has so far followed this line. While IFES is coordinating with ECN on the accuracy of the materials' content, ECN is not attempting to determine the wording, focus or style of the CSOs' materials. This has made the materials development process much less ponderous than for ECN branded materials.

As at the end of the reporting period, the five CSOs had reached a total of 39,347 people with their voter registration information and motivation program, the bulk of which had attended community meetings. Of these people, 47percent were women; 17percent were freed bonded labourers (Kamaiya); and 46percent were Dalits.

IFES has worked with the sub grantees to ensure that local level implementation by the CSOs' local affiliates is effectively monitored. As well as the CSOs' own monitoring programs, at the end of the reporting period IFES engaged 12 local monitors to monitor a sample of the CSOs' activities through to end December. Each of these monitors has worked for the ECN in the relevant district as a computer operator during the voter registration program, and has received significant experience and training in the voter registration process. Depending on availability of further trained staff, this monitoring program may be extended during the next quarter. IFES is also liaising with Carter Center, so that IFES receives feedback from the Carter Center's regionally based observation teams on the implementation and impact of the CSO sub grantees' activities.

The ECN has taken a close interest in this program. On August 26, the A/g Chief Election Commissioner met with representatives of DNF, JWAS, YI and IFES to reinforce the critical aspects for success of the project. Feedback on this project from DEOs in the 26 districts being covered has been overwhelmingly positive, with a commonly expressed view of appreciation that (unusually) they have been included in and have been requested to contribute to a broader-based local level program. District Election Officers have welcomed their substantial participation in the CSOs' planning, and briefings of the CSOs' coordination and voter education staff. IFES intends that this program develop strong partnerships between these CSOs and their affiliates at local level, and the relevant District Election Offices that can be activated for continuing voter and civic education campaigns, and be used as a model for extension to all districts, if funding is available.

Results: Award of five voter education sub grants to CSOs finalised. Four-day orientation program for the five selected sub grantees builds sub grantees' management capacities. Conduct by sub grantees of coordination staff training. Conduct by sub grantees of training of voter educators. Support for development of sub grantees' leaflets, PSAs and street theatre scripts. Development and production of voter educator flip chart, and tote bags, leaflets and Q&A brochures for sub grantee use. Capacity of sub grantees to design voter education materials and scripts increased through IFES support. Development of an integrated internal/external monitoring program for the sub grantees' activities. Strong links being created between sub grantees/local affiliates and District Election Offices.

4. Monitor, Analyze and Report on the Overall Electoral Process

Activity 4.1 – Ongoing Analysis and Reporting on the Evolving Electoral Environment

Summary: IFES continued monitoring, analyzing and reporting on the progress of electoral related developments with regard to the Constituent Assembly and ECN activities. Regular reports on program activity and analysis of the political and electoral environment were provided verbally and in writing to U.S. Embassy officials, USAID and other relevant stakeholders, with a particular focus on the voter registration process. Decisions made by the ECN were translated and provided to all relevant stakeholders, accompanied by IFES analysis. Presentations and briefings were made by the IFES country director to the Carter Center, including to orientation sessions for observers, and to the EU and UNEAD assessment teams.

Results: U.S. Embassy and USAID staff and other relevant stakeholders were kept abreast of electoral developments through regular briefings. Regular updates and briefings to international stakeholders on the voter registration process.

Activity 4.2 – Provision of News Clipping Service

Summary: IFES Nepal continued to deliver its daily news clipping service throughout the reporting period. This service is a compilation of online news reports that are relevant to the evolving political and electoral situation in Nepal. News reports are taken from the major news outlets in Nepal, such as the *Republica*, *Kathmandu Post* and the *Himalayan Times* as well as other reputable online sources of news and analysis on Nepali politics.

Results: Daily news clippings service provided to interested subscribers, serving to keep all domestic and international electoral stakeholders well-informed on developments in the political and electoral environment in Nepal.

5. Provision for unforeseen windows of opportunity

Nothing to report this reporting period.

6. General Management

On September 7, IFES General Agreement with the Social Welfare Council (SWC) was renewed for a further 5 years. As part of the evaluation, an external audit of IFES local accounts from 2006-2010 was completed in July, and found to be satisfactory. Following renewal of the General Agreement with SWC, IFES' Memorandum of Understanding with the ECN was extended on September 12 through to August 2015.

IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During the reporting period the IFES Nepal program has achieved the following major results:

1. Strengthening Democratic Legal Framework

Technical Assistance

- Ongoing day-to-day technical advice to the ECN in the development of the draft political party law and draft segments of the electoral law.
- Revisions to draft electoral laws that more closely align them to international electoral standards.
- Political party consideration of IFES advice on appropriate electoral systems and simplified electoral quotas.
- Amalgamation and synchronization of the election law segments on campaign regulation, EMB, electoral offences and polling and counting.

Organizational Capacity Building

- Increased knowledge of the ECN's legal department, civil society and political party stakeholders of international good practices in legal frameworks for political parties and elections, particularly in relation to campaign regulation.
- Consideration by political parties of simplified electoral system and electoral quota frameworks.

2. Strengthening Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN

Technical Assistance

- Provision of ongoing high-level technical guidance and assistance with the voter registration process and associated training plans and materials and voter education products.
- ECN consideration of the practical measures needed to implement continuous voter registration.
- Influence on ECN decision to revisit municipalities and VDCs for a new voter registration drive.
- Support for the ECN's development of implementation plans for the reopening of registration places through to February 2012.

Organizational Capacity Building

- Completion of the ten-day women focused *Train the Facilitator* BRIDGE program, for 20 participants.
- Preparation and implementation of a three day BRIDGE Introduction to Election Management program, resulting in significantly increased knowledge in the 23 new DEOs who participated.
- Two-day curriculum and materials prepared for a BRIDGE Media and Election program.
- Two half-day BRIDGE tutorial sessions provided for ECN HQ staff.
- More professional approaches to developing training and education programs and materials.
- Organized and fruitful completion of the two-day, regional and national, annual review meetings and annual review draft report.
- Wider staff ownership of ECN's planning processes.

3. Expanding and Improving the Delivery of Voter Education

Capacity Building Support to the ECN on the Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Voter Education Campaign

- Ongoing provision by IFES staff of voter education capacity building support and excellent working relationship maintained with the ECN voter education team.
- Specific capacity building support provided for the development of a single color A5 leaflet, full color A3 size gatefold voter registration Q&A brochures, and full color flipcharts to promote the continuous voter registration process and ECN's new policy decision to allow citizens to register at any registration location.
- Support for development of a draft new radio PSA.

Material and Broadcasting Support for Voter Education Campaigns

- Support for the production of 1,050,000 voter registration leaflets, 61,000 voter registration brochures and 900 voter educator flipcharts.
- Support for the broadcast of a 30-second radio PSA, developed during the last reporting period, on four national FM networks.
- Support for the broadcast of a 30 second PSA in 16 local languages on local affiliate stations of two FM networks until end July.

Sub grants to selected NGOs to develop and Deliver Voter Education Efforts

- Award of five voter education sub grants to CSOs finalised.
- Four-day orientation program for the five selected sub grantees builds sub grantees 'management capacities.
- Conduct by sub grantees of coordination staff training.
- Conduct by sub grantees of training of voter educators.
- Support for development of sub grantees' leaflets, PSAs and street theatre scripts.
- Development and production of voter educator flip chart, tote bags, leaflets and Q&A brochures for sub grantee use.
- Capacity of sub grantees to design voter education materials and scripts increased through IFES support.
- Development of an integrated internal/external monitoring program for the sub grantees' activities.
- Strong links being created between sub grantees/local affiliates and District Election Offices.

4. Monitor, Analyze and Report on the Overall Electoral Process

Ongoing Analysis and Reporting on the Evolving Electoral Environment

- U.S. Embassy, USAID staff and other relevant stakeholders were kept abreast of electoral developments through regular briefings.
- Regular updates and briefings to relevant stakeholders on the voter registration process.

Provision of News Clipping Service

- Daily news clippings service provided to interested subscribers, serving to keep all domestic and international electoral stakeholders well-informed on developments in the political and electoral environment in Nepal.

V. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

For the next quarter IFES will focus on the following activities:

1. Strengthening Democratic Legal Framework

- Review amalgamated and synchronized draft segments of the electoral law and facilitate ECN review and stakeholder discussion of these.
- Review ECN draft of election dispute resolution section of the electoral law
- Continue to work with stakeholders to gain acceptance and broad consensus on a simplified electoral system for Nepal.
- Encourage ECN to finalize its review of the draft political party law and facilitate stakeholder discussion of the revised draft.
- Review the legal framework for voter registration against the ECN's operational and business frameworks for its continuous voter registration system, once these are determined.

2. Strengthening Electoral Management Capacity of the ECN

- Provide technical and capacity building support to the ECN for the implementation of the continuous voter registration program.
- Support ECN's development of strategies and processes for public review of voter register data
- With UNDP ESP, continue to support the ECN training needs for voter registration data amalgamation, verification, cleaning and management.
- Continue to work with UNDP ESP to support ECN to develop a capacity-building strategy based on results of the ECN's 2011 Annual Review.
- Continue to work with the ECN to improve the professionalism of training for its staff, particularly with regard to curriculum and training material development.
- Support the ECN to continue development of and implement an introductory course on ECN structure and functions for ECN non gazetted staff
- Support the ECN BRIDGE team and UNDP ESP in implementing a pilot four day Gender and Elections BRIDGE workshop
- Work with the ECN BRIDGE team and UNDP ESP to develop and implement a four-day Gender and Election BRIDGE training program in 5 regional locations.
- Work with the ECN BRIDGE team to develop and implement a three-day BRIDGE training program for civil society organization representatives.
- Work with the ECN BRIDGE team and BRIDGE partners to develop the 2012 BRIDGE plan.
- Continue to work with the ECN to develop and implement a tutorial program for core ECN staff using tailored BRIDGE methodology and materials.
- Support the Nepal Democracy and Governance BRIDGE partners, particularly World Bank, to conduct a further pilot and review of DG BRIDGE in Nepal and a planned Training of DG BRIDGE facilitators.
- Continue to work with the ECN to ensure gender inclusion is taken into account in programmatic activities and the implementation of the recommendations from the gender mapping assessment.

3. Expanding and Improving the Delivery of Voter Education

- Continue to provide technical, capacity building and material support to the ECN's voter education campaign for the ECN's revised voter registration program, including the development, production and broadcast of voter registration radio and TV PSAs.
- Continue to work with the ECN to develop and implement a voter education strategy and materials to support continuous voter registration and the public review of voter register data.
- Support ECN initiatives for the development of additional voter education materials or events it identifies in its plans for the re-opening of voter registration places.
- Assist the ECN with the re-development of an attractive, informative and user-friendly ECN official website, including information on the current voter registration with photo program.

- Support the development of resources for the ECN's new Electoral Education and Information Centre, such as an electronic library of international electoral materials.
- Continue the implementation of sub-grants with five local civil society organizations to facilitate the delivery of voter education campaigns in 26 districts for marginalized and less likely to register sectors of the population, in support of the ECN's intended re-opening of voter registration places from November 2011 and the continuous voter registration process.
- Initiate processes to determine civil society organization sub grantees for delivery of voter education programs to support the ECN's intended continued voter registration drive in first quarter 2012 and possible public review of voter registers.

4. Monitoring, Analyzing and Reporting on the Electoral Process

- Ongoing analysis provided to the U.S. Embassy, USAID and other stakeholders on the emerging electoral environment and identification of key issues.

VI. EVALUATION/CONCLUSIONS

- During this quarter IFES has continued to provide invaluable strategic and operational support to the ECN. This has been particularly important for the operational effectiveness of the voter registration and electoral legal reform processes. It has included a blend of technical assistance, the development and production of voter education materials and CSO support for the ECN's public information campaigns, as evidenced by the specific activities described in this report.
- Due to IFES ability to respond quickly and effectively to ECN needs, IFES has continued to maintain excellent relationships and allies within the ECN with staff members remaining receptive to IFES' technical and capacity-building support. IFES will continue to build on this in the next quarter. There have been some significant advances in ECN thinking in the last quarter – particularly in relation to using the annual review workshop to review progress against strategic plan objectives, and in the conceptualization of voter education materials. More work is required to ensure that these become permanent advances.
- Once financial year 2012 funding was approved the ECN, though belatedly, commenced examining data from its 'laagat' forms and developed a concept for the re-opening of registration places for four months from November 2011, to deal with 'missing' voters. That the ECN has now recognized that there are around 5-6 million people still to be registered is a step forward. ECN is still, however, demonstrating little ability for forward planning. As at the end of the reporting period ECN was yet to develop any plans for these additional registration measures. This lack of strategic and operational planning and foresight highlights the need for the ECN to receive further strategic and operational planning capacity building support. IFES will liaise with the UNDP ESP to attempt to initiate this later in the year, though this will be difficult to do until the ECN is able to focus on issues other than its ever-extending voter registration program.

- The ECN's voter registration focus has been on the field collection of data, the mechanics of which are proceeding relatively smoothly. Computer servers have been installed in all district offices and some staff trained how to use them; and the ECN's central computer processing center was near completion as at the end of the reporting period. However, the ECN is still to develop further business, operational or technical plans for the processing, amalgamation, verification and cleaning of the data collected, or its maintenance under a continuous voter registration system. There is as yet no available information on the completeness, accuracy or viability of the data on the 9.5 million voters so far collected. DEO staff are not aware of what they should be doing with the servers in their offices. Capacities of the ECN's IT staff remain in general low, and ECN's draft plans for expanding and raising the quality of their IT department are no further towards fruition. As demands on the ECN's IT department increase as voter registration data is processed and maintained, stresses on the ECN's IT capacities will grow, potentially leading to a requirement for significant international support to finalize and maintain the register.
- The ECN has now recognized that the business requirements of maintaining a continuous voter register are very different from those of managing a periodic register as in the past. It is commendable that ECN is now seeking advice on this, and has held the first of a series of consultations with international experts on a way forward. However it is not clear that the ECN secretariat realizes the extent of the work that still has to be done for a continuous voter registration system to be implemented, how this can be achieved by the time the initial data collection phase is completed by mid-next year, or the rate at which the accuracy and completeness of voter registration data so far collected will degrade. ECN will need to pay significantly more attention to continuous voter registration policies and planning over the following two quarters.
- ECN, with the support of the BRIDGE partners in Nepal, is implementing one of the most active and innovative BRIDGE programs in the world. Technical sustainability is being maintained by training additional ECN and civil society facilitators, in the face of the problems caused by civil service rotation policies. Financial sustainability still needs to be considered more seriously by ECN; the one BRIDGE workshop scheduled for this year that ECN had agreed to fund was cancelled by ECN in September at the last minute. Increasing demands from ECN members and staff for wider distribution of the fees the ECN makes available to its BRIDGE facilitators and presenters also need to be carefully considered by ECN so that these do not affect BRIDGE standards and availability of ECN's BRIDGE funding.
- The IFES-funded CSO sub grantees' voter education projects have commenced well. The proof of success, however, will be in the ability of the CSOs to implement over the next quarter the many thousands of community meetings and household visits they have committed to do. The hundreds of voter educators being trained in 26 districts will provide a nucleus for future election-related community education activities. It has been heartening to see the very active and genuine cooperation between civil society and the ECN, at both district and headquarters levels, in these projects. Hopefully this cooperative model can be extended both to additional districts and for future voter and civic education programs.

National Democratic Institute (NDI)
July – September 2011, Quarterly Report
Total budget: \$14,422,000 Expenses to date: \$2,281,934

I. SUMMARY

Following the resignation of Prime Minister Jhalaranath Khanal, Baburam Bhattarai was elected Prime Minister by the Constituent Assembly (CA). The Prime Minister claimed an early success with the transfer of control of Maoist rebel weapons being turned over to the Nepal government, an important step in the post-conflict peace process. There was also progress, informally, on some ideas regarding integration and rehabilitation issues, although no formal endorsements of any ideas were made by the major political parties. While some progress was made on constitution drafting, there continued to be major differences over the nature of the federal system to be adopted. Factionalism within the Maoist party and the government's coalition members pressuring for key ministries did not bode well for a quick resolution to stalemate over the peace and constitution drafting processes.

This quarter, the National Democratic Institute ("NDI" or the "Institute"), along with subgrant partners Internews (IN) and The Asia Foundation (TAF), continued its program to strengthen democratic political processes in Nepal titled "*Strengthening Political Parties, Electoral and Legislative Processes (SPELP)*." The program seeks to promote political party development, strengthen capacity for citizen oversight of the electoral process and support the institutional strengthening of the Constituent Assembly/Parliament and improve its capacity to address constituent needs.

NDI conducted a week-long multiparty training-of-trainers for political parties in Pokhara and Chitwan and organized follow-up meetings on community dialogues and round table discussions for ten districts. The Institute facilitated the creation of the Next Generation Parliamentarians Group (NGPG), a forum that provides ongoing technical support to first-term parliamentarians. TAF conducted a third round of town hall meetings in 45 municipalities across the country, and Internews held investigative journalism trainings in four locations across Nepal.

Next quarter, NDI will organize individual consultations on reform areas with political parties and public committee hearings in Kathmandu. TAF will continue to work closely with marginalized interest groups to identify and audit relevant legislation, while Internews will work the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ) to create a database of Nepali journalists and promote the Nepali election channel website to encourage dialogue and discussion.

II. BACKGROUND

The month of July witnessed considerable political turmoil. Internal debate continued within the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M) on party work division and forging a uniform approach to the peace and constitution drafting processes. The Maoists' decision to reshuffle the cabinet with new ministers from all three factions prompted further disagreements

between the major parties. Communist Party of Nepal - Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal inducted the new Maoist Ministers despite strong opposition from his party and the Nepali Congress (NC). Meanwhile, the opposition NC demanded the resignation of the Prime Minister as per the five-point agreement to extend the CA's tenure on May 29.

On August 14, Prime Minister Khanal eventually resigned following his inability to form a new consensus government. The existing differences between major political parties failed to create a conducive political environment for the establishment of a unity government. On August 28, Baburam Bhattarai became the country's 35th Prime Minister with 340 votes, while rival Ram Chandra Poudel (NC) garnered 235 votes. The Maoist victory was ensured with the support of the Unified Democratic Madheshi Front (UDMF), an alliance of five parties from the Tarai comprised of 71 parliamentarians.

The election of Baburam Bhattarai, a 57 year old scholar, was hailed from all quarters. Immediately after assuming office, the new Prime Minister pledged to take the peace process forward, including rehabilitation of the former Maoist combatants of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) within 45 days. Prime Minister Bhattarai claimed early success when the keys to the containers holding the weapons of the nearly 20,000 Maoists ex-combatants were transferred to the Special Committee for the Integration and Rehabilitation of Maoist Combatants. Though the handing of the keys to the Special Committee was considered a symbolic gesture, the move was vehemently protested by the hardline faction led by Maoist Vice-Chair Mohan Baidya. In a press statement, Baidya called the handover of the keys a "suicidal bid," synonymous to demobilizing the PLA. Baidya, who advocates for a "new revolution," further stated that the decision-making units of the party had decided that the regrouping of the PLA would start only after an agreement had been reached among major parties on the modality of the integration and rehabilitation package. Expressing his displeasure at the stance taken by the Baidya faction, Maoist chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal on September 12 urged Vice-Chair Baidya to adhere to the party's official line of peace and constitution and asked him to join the government. Following the meeting, Baidya turned down the request saying that there was no moral or political ground to do so until the handover dispute was resolved.

On August 28, the Supreme Court responded to a writ petition confirming that the previous extension of the CA (May 28 to August 31, 2011) was legitimate and should be upheld. The parliament on August 29 voted overwhelmingly to extend the tenure of the CA for three months until November 30, 2011. While some progress was made on constitution drafting, there were major differences over the nature of the federal system to be adopted. There was also progress, informally, on some ideas regarding integration and rehabilitation issues, although no formal endorsement of these was made by the major political parties.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

A. Political Party Development

Regional Political Party Training of Trainers (ToT) in Pokhara and Chitwan

From September 3 to September 9, NDI conducted a regional political party training-of-trainers session (ToT) in Pokhara, in the Western Development Region, covering 17 districts: Kathmandu; Myagdi; Baglung; Lamjung; Manang; Mustang; Syangja; Parbat; Kaski; Gorkha; Tanahu; Palpa; Nawalparasi; Rupandehi; Kapilbastu; Bardia; and Dang. This is the first training at the regional level to replicate the national level ToT held in Kathmandu in June of this year. A total of 49 participants from nine political parties took part in the week-long training. There was a roughly two-to-one ratio of men to women with just over half of participants aged 18-39.

Similarly, the second regional training-of-trainers in Chitwan, in the central development region, took place from September 21 to September 27. Participants came from 17 districts of the central region: Kathmandu; Lalitpur; Bhaktapur; Dhading; Nuwakot; Sindhupalchowk; Makwanpur; Bara; Parsa; Sarlahi; Dhanusha; Siraha; Mahottari; Rautahat; Chitwan; Rupandehi; and Kapilbastu. A total of 54 district level party activists participated in the week-long training. Figure 1 and Figure 2 provide a breakdown of participants in Pokhara and Chitwan by age and gender.

“I liked the session on *Working with Party Branches*. We had never really thought about enhancing our organizational skills in this way. We also realized the important role party branches play in the overall party structure.”

Shyam Lama, RPP

Figure 1

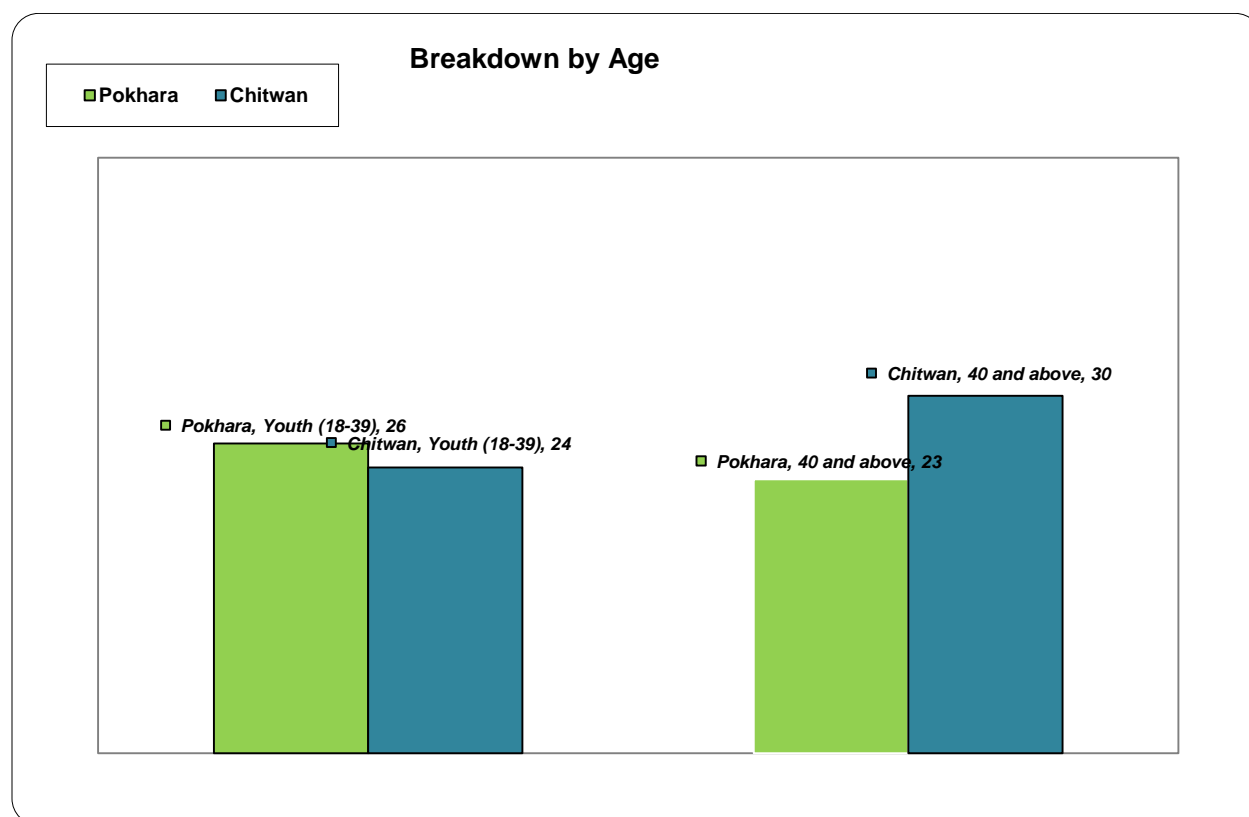
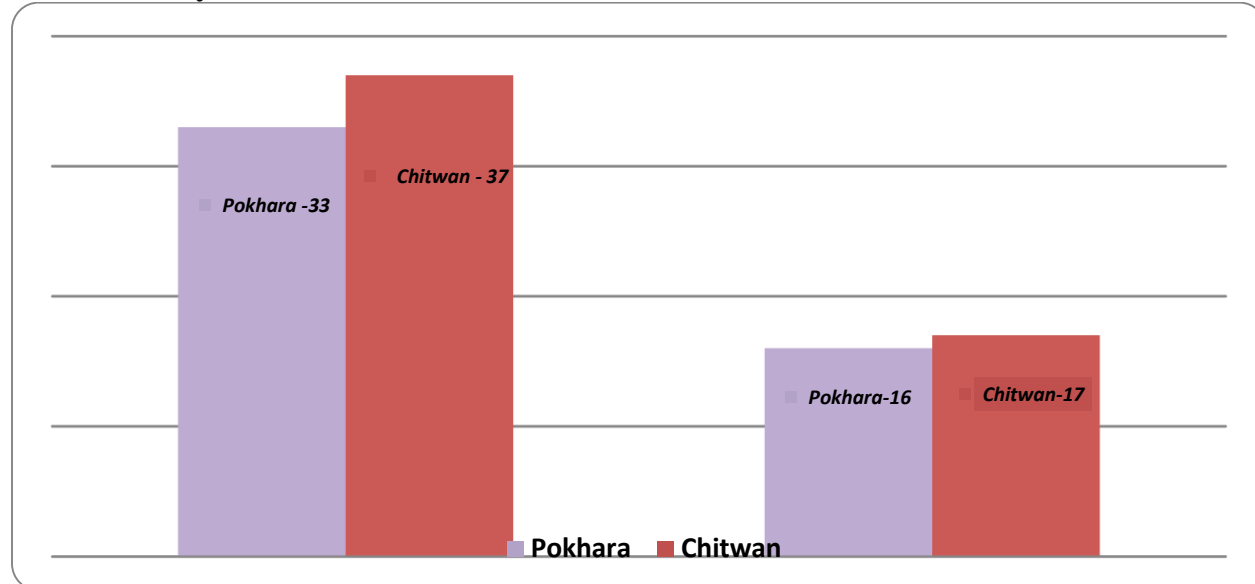


Figure 2

Breakdown by Gender



The ToTs covered five modules: public speaking; training and facilitation skills; conflict resolution; roles and functions of political parties in a democratic system; and working with party branches. Five master trainers, who had participated in the national level ToT, co-facilitated with international and national experts (Figure 3). The objective of the pairing of national and international experts with master trainers was to strengthen each party's training department by building the capacity of parties to produce skilled trainers. USAID representatives and Inter Party Alliance (IPA) members also observed the trainings.

Figure 3

Modules	Pokhara		Chitwan	
	<i>Facilitator</i>	<i>Co-Facilitator</i>	<i>Facilitator</i>	<i>Co-Facilitator</i>
Public Speaking	Mark Wallem	Catherine Ryan	Catherine Ryan	Ranjana Maskey
Training & Facilitation Skills	Jay Nishaant	Ragunath Paudel	Jay Nishaant	Bhusan Shrestha
Conflict Resolution	Surya P. Nepal	Bandhu Chand & Dhan Bahadur Budha	Surya P. Nepal	Birendra Upadhyay & Prakash Yadav
Roles and Functions of Political Parties in a Democratic System	Ram Guragain	Somnath Adhikari	Ram Guragain	Akthar Hussein
Working with Party Branches	Jackie Corcoran	Basu Dev Chaudhary	Mark Wallem	Bhuban Pathak

Political Party Trainer Conducts Individual Political Party Meetings and Individual Reform Workshops with Political Parties and the Inter Party Alliance (IPA)

From July 16 to August 4, the Institute organized individual consultations between nine political parties and a visiting political party expert. These individual party consultations also formed the basis for subsequent workshops designed primarily on individual party needs. In total, nine individual party consultations and 12 individual workshops were conducted over the three weeks. Senior party leaders and central committee members participated in these workshops.

During the consultations and workshops, the expert gave an overview of the US political system with a special focus on successful campaign Barak Obama in 2008. Other topics included internal democracy and federalism (the structure of a party and its relation to federalism), campaign strategy, internal and external communication, the use of new technologies in targeting and outreach activities, message development and dissemination. The expert also responded to questions from participants about elections, roles and functions of parties in the US federal system, message development and characteristics of a winning message.

Below is the list of parties who held consultations and workshops with the visiting political party expert during this reporting quarter (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Date	Political Parties	Topics	Total	
			Female	Male
July 25	NC-Youth leaders and students	Election Campaign	5	8
July 26	Madheshi Janadhikar Forum-Nepal (MJF-N)	External Communication	3	14
July 27	Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML)	Message Development and Dissemination	4	8
July 27	Sadhbahwana Party (SP)	Internal Communication	2	18
July 28	Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP)	Internal Communication	2	13
July 29	Tarai Madhesh Loktantrik Party (TMLP)	Structural Organization and Internal Democracy	3	10
August 1	UCPN-M	Women in the Democratic Party and Campaign Message	18	-
August 1	NC	Federalism/Campaign Strategy and Communication Strategy	8	11
August 2	Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist Leninist (CPN-ML)	Federalism/Campaign Strategy and Communication Strategy	4	17
August 2	Madheshi Janadhikar Forum Nepal- Democratic	Internal Communication	2	13

	(MJFN-D)			
August 3	Inter Party Alliance	Federalism	2	11
August 4	CPN-UML	Federal Legislative System	1	13
Total			54	136

Inter Party Women's Alliance (IPWA) District Expansion and Capacity Building Training

From September 12 to September 18, IPWA board members, along with an NDI representative, traveled to Terathum district, Eastern Development Region for IPWA district sub-committee formation and capacity building training. The team comprised of Hon. Meena Pandey (NC), Hon. Sabitra Bhusal (CPN-UML), Shashi Shrestha (UCPN-M), and Shenaz Rehman (MJF-N). The opening session took place on September 14 in the presence of representatives from major political parties (UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP and CPN-ML), the Chief District Officer, the Local Development Officer, the Deputy Superintendent of Police, journalists and civil society organization members.

Following the district sub-committee formation in Terathum, IPWA, with logistical support from NDI, organized a three-day training program from September 15 to September 17 on "Constituent Assembly and Women Leadership Development." A total of 40 women activists participated in the three-day training program. The main objective of the program was to strengthen the ability of women to advocate for their rights during the constitution drafting process and to help IPWA chapters get recognition in their districts. The training focused on the Constituent Assembly, women's leadership development, concepts on state restructuring, women's rights and federalism.

Internews Journalism Trainings

Investigative Journalism Training/Antenna Foundation Nepal (AFN)

Internews (IN) partnered with the Antenna Foundation to conduct five trainings on investigative journalism during this quarter, held in Biratnagar, Kathmandu, Nepalgunj and Pokhara (see Appendix 1: Training Course Lesson Plan). Participants were selected based on a personal essay, journalism experience, gender, inclusiveness, and lack of opportunity to benefit from Kathmandu-based training programs.

The 10-day trainings covered topics, including the tools and techniques of investigative journalism, safety issues, web resources for journalists, journalism ethics, transparency and right to information laws. A total of sixty journalists (including 21 women, 14 indigenous people, and 8 dalits) were trained during the reporting period. Lead trainer Mohan Mainali and co-trainers Chandrakishor Jha and Umid Bagchand facilitated the trainings.

IN also conducted five 10-day Journalist Safety Training course this quarter.

Journalist Safety Training

Journalist safety was one of the key components of the investigative journalism training course. Based on the initial training-of-trainers on safety training by Hart Security, participants were taught how to better ensure their personal safety while conducting investigative journalism.

The training was conducted with the objective of increasing the participants' understanding of what makes them potential targets and familiarizing them with a specific process to help them identify threats or dangerous situations. The training covered issues such as safe travel planning and situational awareness; how to safely cover riots, demonstrations, political unrest and acts of political violence such as bombings; and how microphones and cameras can appear as weapons from a distance. Participants were also trained in small arms awareness, along with how to assess and obtain effective cover from those weapons if exposed to live gunfire.

The session allowed the journalists to share their personal experiences of safety issues in their reporting and come up with tools to help make their work more secure.

Course One – Nepalgunj (I)

Between July 3 and 12, Internews conducted its first of five journalism courses for four women and eight men in Nepalgunj. IN's lead trainer, Mohan Mainali, and co-trainer, Umid Bagchand, facilitated the ten-day training session. IN invited guest lecturers Pannalal Gupta, a journalist from Nepalgunj, UCPN-Maoist representative Dambar BK, Nepali Congress member Rajkumar Shah, police officer Uday Tamang, Rajendra Dahal from the Centre for Investigative Journalism, and inspirational speakers Hazi Maulana and Jiyaul Mustafa Hurani.

Day one began with a brief inaugural session by Pannalal Gupta and was followed by introductions and a discussion of expectations. The next session dealt with the concepts, tools, and techniques of investigative journalism. The *second day's* sessions were devoted to discussions about investigative journalism and democratic development, and ended with feedback on what previous speakers had discussed. On *day three*, sessions were devoted to journalists' safety, including threats, reporting under dangerous conditions, and providing news coverage of a demonstration.

Day four was dedicated to the use of computer and internet research tools. The language program Nepali Unicode was introduced and its benefits and uses explained. Electronic versions of Nepali-Nepali, English-Nepali, and technological dictionaries were shown to the participants. Later, participants learned how to install and use Unicode Nepali and dictionaries on their own computers. Following this was a session on how to employ search engines and other web resources for journalists. In the last session of the day, participants were introduced to the concept of blog making. Every person created his/her own blog by the end of the session.

Day five's sessions focused on practical issues, such as how and where to find story ideas. This was followed by a session on the importance of reading rules and regulations in order to find paper trails. The participants were then given two sessions to research investigative journalism stories.

On *day six*, the Nepal Red Cross Society provided first aid information. The participants learned about emergency trauma as well as how to deal with emergency medical situations, including how to stop arterial bleeding, how to deal with shocks and breathing problems, and how to work with broken bones and create makeshift splints.

The *seventh day* was dedicated to research techniques. Participants learned how some documents can create opportunities that lead to new research. This research session was followed by a video presentation by NDI on “The Role of Political Parties and INGO Support for Democracy and Elections.” The participants were then given time for field research; upon returning, they discussed what each person had found during their research. The day concluded with the participants being assigned to read the Right to Information Law.

Day eight was devoted to the concept and use of the Right to Information Law (RTI). The module encouraged journalists to use RTI to promote transparency and information gathering. This was followed by a video presentation by Ramjee Dahal, who showed how he used RTI to investigate a journalist’s murder. Sanjeeb Ghimire also talked about using RTI to obtain political party records and finances. During the last session, participants wrote sample requests to obtain information, as per RTI regulations.

On the *ninth day*, participants discussed the importance of ethics in credible investigative journalism. Participants were then taught how to organize their own investigative research. In the last two sessions of the day, the focus was on writing skills. Participants completed writing exercises to hone their skills.

During the *last day* of the conference, the first session focused on strategies for safer investigative reporting. Afterwards, Rajendra Dahal, President of the Antenna Foundation and the Centre for Investigative Journalism (CIJ), explained that the CIJ was providing both financial and editorial assistance to journalists doing investigative stories. The penultimate session provided an explanation of Freedom Forum’s web portal and course participant’s chat room. Before the conclusion of the training, participants completed an evaluation on the conference.

Course Two – Biratnagar (II)

The second Internews investigative training workshop was held in Biratnagar from July 24 to August 2. The class of participants included four women and eight men. IN’s lead trainer, Mohan Mainali, worked with co-trainer Chandrakishor Jha. Other speakers at the training included Shiva Bahadur Karki, Bhim Parajuli, Sushil Sharma, Krishna Rasaili, Saroj Gautam, Pushkar Karki, and Rajendra Dahal. The course content and schedule closely matched that of the Nepalgunj workshop. Participants in Biratnagar heard presentations from seven speakers, who spoke to them on issues including minority rights and safety.

Course Three – Nepalgunj (II)

The third Internews investigative training workshop was held in Nepalgunj from August 7 to 16. The class of participants included five women and seven men. Speakers at the training included Thakur Singh Tharu, Tamalopa party member Bijaya Gupta, UML member Ratna Khatri,

Ishowri BK, Uday Raj Tamang, and Rajendra Dahal. The remainder of the course followed the schedule of the two previous workshops.

Course Four – Kathmandu (II)

The fourth Internews investigative training workshop was held in Kathmandu from August 21 to 30. The class of participants included four women and eight men. Guest speakers included Rajnish Bhandari, UML representative Binda Pandey, Nepali Congress representative Gagan Thapa, Sharad Chandra Basti, Bigyan Raj Sharma, Charimaya Tamang, and Rajendra Dahal.

Course Five – Pokhara (II)

The fifth Internews investigative training workshop was held in Pokhara from September 4 to 13. The class of participants included four women and eight men. Speakers at the training included Dipendra Shrestha, Anandaraj Mulmi, CPN-UML representative Somnath Adhikari, Nepali Congress representative Yagya B Thapa, Anjana KC, Janakiraj Bhattarai, and Rajendra Dahal.

Date	District	Number of Participants	
		Male	Female
July 3-12	Nepalgunj	8	4
July 24-August 2	Biratnagar	8	4
August 7-16	Nepalgunj	7	5
August 21-30	Kathmandu	8	4
September 4-13	Pokhara	8	4
Total		39	21

B. Legislative Strengthening

Effective Committee Work

Consultation with Committee Chairs and Secretaries

Legislative Strengthening Program Senior Advisor Dr. Sherrie Wolff arrived in Nepal on July 13 and met with parliamentary committee chairs, party chief whips, and the Secretary General of the Legislature-Parliament Secretariat to discuss the Institute's effective committee workshop and parliamentary internship program (Figure 5).

Figure 5

Committee	Chair	Secretary
Women, Children and Social Welfare	Hon. Sandhya Dev	Birendra Karki
International Relations and Human Rights	Hon. Padam L. Bishwokarma	Binod K. Adhikary
Legislative	Hon. Yasodha Gurung	Bharat Gautam
Finance and Labor Relations	Hon. Shusila Kangdanwa	-
Development	Hon. Jitendra Prasad Sonar	-
Public Accounts	Hon. Ram Krishna Yadav	Som Bdr. Thapa

State Affairs	Hon. Ram Nath Dhakal	-
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NDI requested that chairs provide their feedback and suggestions on the topics and content of the workshop. NDI also briefed the committee chairs on the valuable suggestions and recommendations shared by the participating committee chairs and secretaries with the Institute during the Parliamentary Program Planning Workshop held in January of this year, and provided a copy of the workshop report to them. Committee chairs and their staff members expressed interest in attending the 'Effective Committee Workshop' scheduled for August 2 and 3.

Effective Committee Workshop

On August 2 and 3, the Institute organized the 'Effective Committee Workshop' in Kathmandu. The chairs, members, secretaries and other senior staff of Legislative Committee, State Affairs



Effective Committee Workshop held in Kathmandu

Committee, Finance and Labor Relations Committee, Development Committee, Natural Resource and Means Committee and Women, Children and Social Welfare Committee participated in the workshop.

The workshop was primarily a sharing and learning event. Comparative analysis was made among the parliamentary committees under the Presidential System (US), Westminster System (Canada) and Hybrid System (Germany). Likewise, the experts also

shared the law-making process under these three different political models. The different types of committee hearings were discussed, along with a video presentation that highlighted a few hearings that had taken place in the US and British committees. (*Session Outline in Figure 6*). Three international experts -- Dr. Horst Mathaeus, Governance Coordinator of the German Development Cooperation, Ms. Sheri Meyerhoffer, Program Director of the Canadian Bar Association and Dr. Sherrie Wolff - and a Nepali expert, made presentations on different aspects of committee work. Altogether, 46 participants attended the workshop.

Figure 6

Session	Experts
Comparative Examination of Parliamentary Committees:	
A. Presidential System	Dr. Sherrie Wolff, Senior Technical Advisor, NDI-Nepal (USA)
B. Westminster System	Sheri Meyerhoffer, Project Director, Canadian Bar

Session	Experts
C. Hybrid System	Association (Canada) Dr. Horst Matthaeus, Coordinator, Governance, German Development Cooperation (Germany)
Law Making Process	Tek Dhungana, Legal Advisor to the Legislature-Parliament (Nepal) Dr. Sherrie Wolff (USA) Dr. Horst Mathaeus (Germany) Sheri Meyerhoffer (Canada)
Importance of Hearings Examples of Oversight and Public/Expert Input on Potential Draft Laws/Issues	Dr. Sherrie Wolff, Senior Technical Advisor, NDI-Nepal
Video on Committee Hearing	Dr. Sherrie Wolff, Senior Technical Advisor, NDI-Nepal
Simulation/Exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample Law/Issues • Questions and Witness Testimony • Review and Examination of Simulation Process 	Dr. Sherrie Wolff, Senior Technical Advisor, NDI-Nepal
Simulation/Exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of Committee Hearing 	Dr. Sherrie Wolff, Senior Technical Advisor, NDI-Nepal

Parliamentary Media Center

TAF opened a new media center for the Secretariat within the Singha Durbar premises. TAF collaborated with Chemonics International Inc. to create the center and was in charge of the day-to-day oversight of the construction. TAF and Chemonics handed the keys of the media center to the Parliament Secretariat on September 15. As of the date of this report, TAF was discussing with the Secretary General a date for an inaugural event.

TAF is also working to design and implement a system for the upkeep and sustainability of the media center with the Secretariat, including technical training and practical policies. The first meeting between TAF and senior Secretariat officials was scheduled for September 18, 2011, but was postponed until mid-October after the Dashain holiday due to urgent matters at the Secretariat.

Additionally, TAF continued to work with Interface Nepal, broadcasting 13 episodes of the radio program *Hamro Kanoon* on 25 different FM radio stations, ensuring an adequate geographical coverage of all regions. The program discussed various aspects of Nepali legislative processes, including: Community Mediation Act; Muluki Ain Diwas; Bill on Investment Board; Black Marketing Act; Consumer Protection Act; Children Act; Tourism Act; Senior Citizens Act; Real Estate Business Transaction Act; and the Pesticide Act.

Interest Group Audits

TAF continued to partner with the Nepal Constitution Foundation (NCF) to convene a broad coalition of five specific interest groups, which include Dalit, Madheshi, women, youth and *Janajati*, to conduct legislative audits – social audits of specific legislations based on the perspectives of their respective groups.

The bills audited this quarter include: Bill to Amend Some Acts to Make Public Service Inclusive; Bill on Real Estate Business Transaction Act; Bank and Financial Institutions Bill; Higher Education Bill; Bill on Sexual Harassment in a Work Place; Electricity Act; Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Development Fund Act; and Real Estate Business Transaction Act.

Feedback TAF received from these interest group social audits included:

- The audit group felt that the proposed Bill on Real Estate Business Transaction did not capture all the regulations and legal codes that generally pertain to real estate business. For example, even when the statute was assumed to focus on the issue of licensing, it left out important aspects of licensing. Furthermore, other aspects of real estate business like professional valuation services, brokerages, land development or improvement, net leasing, property management, real estate marketing, investment of real estate, relocation services, etc, were left to the judgment of the regulatory authority, and there were little institutions and procedures to check their exercise of power or to prevent decisions from being made arbitrarily.
- The audit group on the Bill on Higher Education felt that the objective of making this particular academic sector more effective and competitive could be achieved by largely decentralizing the universities. The audit group also identified gaps in the Bill, which include the issue of ownership of the universities, the independence of academicians, etc.
- The audit group felt that the punishment as envisaged in the Bill on Sexual Harassment at a Work Place was very lenient and that recommended a significant increase in both the fine amounts and prison time. Furthermore, the group recommended the exclusion of the provision of repeat offence and the inclusion of new age medium, such as the internet and mobiles, in the list of methods of sexually harassment.
- The audit group felt that the Penal Offence (Determination of Sentence and Implementation) Act should prioritize the reformative aspect of sentencing and differentiate it from the sentencing of criminals with little chances of reformation; this would help emphasize the preventive aspect of punishment.



Photos from the interest group audits

Additionally, TAF contracted New Spotlight to publish audit findings on the Bill on Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Commission on Disappearances to disseminate the findings and recommendations of the aforementioned social audits through print media. The audit findings have been published in Nepali magazines – *Shichhyak* and *Nepal*, and one English magazine – *New Spotlight*. *New Spotlight* magazine was working to publish audit findings on the the Bill to Amend Some Acts to Make Some Public Services Inclusive.

Town Hall Consultations

TAF continued working with its three local partners, Samudayak Sarathi (SS), Rural Community Development Service Council (RCDSC), and WomenAct (WA), to conduct the third-wave of the youth- and women-focused town hall meetings to discuss specific legislative agendas in 45 municipalities across Nepal. The bill discussed in this wave of town hall meetings was the Bill to Amend Some Acts to Make Some Public Services Inclusive. Since the issue of inclusion has been a thriving debate across political and constitutional debates, and is of direct concern to the youth and women, it generated enthusiastic debates in the meetings.

Approximately 2400 participants attended these townhall meetings:

Total	Male	Female	Upper Caste		A-Janajati		Dalit		Undefined	Muslim
			Hill/ Mountain	Terai	Hill/ Mountain	Terai	Hill/ Mountain	Terai		
2399	1268	1117	964	308	417	191	175	123	195	26

Recommendations forwarded in the town hall meetings included:

- The percentages in reservation provisions were not consistent throughout the Act, which indicated a lack of cogent principles behind the effort to drive inclusiveness. For example, the reservation for women in security force was stated as 20 percent whereas in other sectors it was stated as 33 percent.
- The current Bill was premised on the demographics of Census 2058. The more recent Census 2068 would provide a more accurate and well-timed data instead.
- The bill addressed the issue of caste, gender and regional discrimination – not class. Therefore, the clause of "deprived by economic and social" should be removed or replaced by quoting the provision of "qualified and able", which would ensure competent people to be mainstreamed through reservation mechanisms.
- Madhesis, dalits, muslims and indigenous groups, as well as other deprived sections of various communities, have their own distinct identity and specific needs and challenges. Thus, it is necessary to place them categorically under different sections than putting them all together.
- The allocation of reservation on grounds of disability should be stratified based on the types of disability. The reservation should be guaranteed for the disabled even in the security forces in technical and administrative functions.

This reporting quarter, Honorables Ramesh Lekhak and Shobhakar Parajuli, both part of the legislative committee, attended four townhall meetings. Hon. Lekhak participated in the meetings held in Gorakha and Chitwan; Hon. Parajuli participated in the meetings held in Sindhuli and Sindhupalchok.



Snapshots of the Town hall meetings

On September 20, TAF townhall partners organized a public event to submit the synthesized report from the townhall meetings to members of the Legislative Committee of the Parliament. Honorable Shobhakar Parajuli chaired the submission program.

TAF also initiated activities to conduct the fourth wave of the townhall meetings, which included a training on facilitation skills to the moderators and introduction to the selected bills, including the Bill to Amend Voter Registration Act and Electricity Act 2065. Sanat Acharya conducted the session on facilitation and TAF legal consultant Dinesh Tripathi introduced and discussed the selected bills with the moderators. The next wave is scheduled for November 1 to December 1, 2011.

Next Generation Parliamentarians Group (NGPG)

Knowledge Sharing Seminar on Unemployment

On July 22 and 23, NDI organized a seminar on “Unemployment in Nepal: Challenges and Solutions” for first-term parliamentarians. The seminar was conducted following interest expressed by parliamentarians who had previously participated in a seminar on “Power Crisis in Nepal” organized by the Institute.



NDI staff & experts during the seminar on “Unemployment in Nepal: Challenges and Solutions”

The seminar was a knowledge sharing and interaction event aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding of young parliamentarians on the issue of unemployment. Experts on economics, sociology and planning responded to queries posed by parliamentarians and also provided key recommendations on how parliamentarians could effectively utilize their roles to address the challenges of unemployment. Altogether, 28 parliamentarians from seven political parties attended the seminar.

During the seminar, the Institute also facilitated a discussion that provided a forum for parliamentarians to discuss the formal formation of the NGPG. Some parliamentarians suggested that an additional round of consultations, especially with the Chief Whip of the UCPN-M would be essential in expediting the process. It was unanimously agreed that after receiving the confirmation from the Maoist’s Chief Whip, NGPG would be ready to finalize a formal structure.

Interaction with MP Emma Reynolds, Labour Party, United Kingdom

On August 16, Senior Country Director Mark Wallem and Director for Parliamentary Programs Jay Nishaant met with British Member of Parliament (MP) Emma Reynolds to discuss and plan for an interactive program scheduled for August 24. Hon. Reynolds serves as a “Shadow Foreign Minister” in the capacity of a member of the opposition party. NDI briefed Hon. Reynolds on the preparation of a planned interaction with members of the Legislature-Parliament. The Institute also updated her on NDI’s programs and related activities with the Parliament of Nepal and provided a detailed briefing package, including the list of potential participants and a tentative agenda.

On August 24, NDI organized an interactive program between the first-term parliamentarians of the Legislature-Parliament of Nepal and Hon. Emma Reynolds, MP, House of Commons, United Kingdom. The program focused on the topic, “National Foreign Policy/Affairs: Role of Parliamentarians.”

In his opening remarks, Hon. Padam Lal Bishwokarma, Chair of the Committee for International Relations and Human Rights, briefed participants on the role of the International Relations and Human Rights Committee of Nepal. Hon. Reynolds gave a presentation on foreign policies drawn from her experience working in the House of Commons. In addition, she highlighted the roles that the parliament, the committees, and individual MPs play when important decisions related to international issues take place. Hon. Reynolds explained the concept of “shadow government” with a special focus on United Kingdom, including the benefits and challenges associated with forming a “shadow cabinet.”



MP Emma Reynolds during interaction with first-term parliamentarians of Legislature-Parliament of Nepal

Altogether, 16 MPs representing UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, MJF-N, MJFN-R, and CPN-United participated in the program.

Formation of NGPG

On August 26, the Institute facilitated a meeting to help first-term members of the Legislative-Parliament of Nepal discuss the charter of the proposed NGPG and select members for the Coordination Committee. The main objective of the meeting was to formalize the formation of NGPG.

The formation of NGPG resulted from a series of meetings and informal discussions, which NDI conducted over the course of several months with interested parliamentarians, party leaders, Chief Whips and Whips from major political parties. Concurrently, NDI organized seminars on subjects of national interest as well as interactions events with national and international experts. These events created learning and knowledge sharing opportunities for the first-term parliamentarians. It also provided space for the parliamentarians to discuss the possible formation of a group such as the NGPG. The NGPG provides a nascent forum for the young and first-term parliamentarians to interact, learn and grow together. Although it is an informal entity at present, as the NGPG proves its usefulness and gains legitimacy, its chances of becoming a formal entity will be greatly strengthened. In the meantime, the NGPG remains committed to strengthening its efforts in pursuing its goals.

Hon. Reynolds responded to several questions from participants. The questions were mostly related to similar and different practices in relation to committee work in the British Parliament: how important decisions are made by the government; whether or not the parliament or the committees are consulted; and how British parliamentarians maintain good relations with their constituencies. The

Nepali parliamentarians appreciated Hon. Reynolds considerable experience and knowledge.

The participants formally endorsed a proposal for the formation of NGPG by signing the charter. Likewise, a 21-member Coordination Committee was formed. The committee unanimously elected Hon. Sunil Babu Panta as the founding coordinator. According to the newly-elected members, the formation of NGPG marked a historical event which could pave the way for future Nepalese first-term lawmakers to be groomed for the roles they will play as representatives of their constituents. Altogether, 19 parliamentarians, representing UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, MJFN, MJF-D, MJF-R, CPN United and Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal (RPP-Nepal), participated in the event.

Meeting of NGPG Coordination Committee

On September 13, NDI facilitated the first meeting of the NGPG Coordination Committee in Kathmandu to: 1) nominate members for vacant positions in the committee; 2) select the General Secretary and the Treasurer; and 3) discuss the job descriptions and code of conduct of the office bearers. Hon. Kiran Yadav (NC) and Hon. Harish Thakulla (UCPN-M) were named to the vacant positions. The group decided to postpone the official selection of the General Secretary and Treasurer until a later date to allow for additional time to give notice of the vacancies to interested parties. Altogether, 15 parliamentarians participated in the meeting.

The group also identified the topics of future capacity building and knowledge sharing events, such as:

- Public Speaking
- Media Management
- Comprehensive Leadership Development
- Communicating with diplomatic missions
- Networking
- Women's Issues (Trafficking, Domestic Violence, etc)
- Conservation of forest and utilization of natural resources
- Interaction and sharing with similar South Asian groups and parliamentary caucuses
- Orientations on parliamentary procedures and practices

Improving the Parliamentary Library

TAF was awaiting the approval of the Secretary General to move forward with the library improvement plan. The TAF report, created by Krishna Mani Bhandary, Chief Librarian of Tribhuvan University, evaluated the current status of the Parliament Secretariat Library and crafted a five-year improvement plan. Due to the time constraints placed upon the Secretary General, the final approval of the plan could not happen this quarter. However, TAF initiated discussion with consult Binod Bhattarai on identifying strategies to link the Parliament Library with the newly established media center.

Community Dialogue and Round Table Discussions

Follow-up on Progress

During this quarter, NDI focused on follow-up activities and gathered information on progress and challenges in regard to the execution of the action plans prepared during the community dialogues and round table discussions in May and June this year. The team made follow-up calls to the district coordinators and acquired information on the functioning of the monitoring committees and their coordination/communication with the respective parliamentarians in reaching their set targets. Similarly, two NDI staff members visited Bara district to observe a follow-up meeting of the monitoring committee.

Delegation of MPs and NGO representatives to Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

On August 4, the district coordinator, members of the monitoring committee, and four parliamentarians from Syangja district traveled to Kathmandu to lobby the government to build a cold storage facility in Syangja and receive official recognition for the district as the “Orange District.” These two objectives had been identified as goals in the action plan during the community dialogue and round table discussions in June of this year.

The team met with Hon. Hari Narayn Yadav, Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives and the secretary of the ministry Mr. Umakant Jha. The minister and the secretary pledged their support to the monitoring committee. The team also visited the National Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance and met senior officials there for the same purpose. NDI was also present during the meetings.

Follow-up Meetings with MPs and NGO Coordinators



Hon. Chandra Bdr. Gurung (RPP-Nepal) at a Community Dialogue follow-up meeting

On September 15 and 16, the Institute conducted two community dialogue follow-up meetings in Kathmandu with the parliamentarians and the District Coordinators of 10 districts. The objectives of the meetings were to review the progress on the action plans prepared during the community dialogues and round table discussions held earlier in the year and to prepare an outline for upcoming activities at the central and local level with the help and involvement of the parliamentarians.

Twenty-four parliamentarians, including a minister, a member of the International Relations and Human Rights Committee, the Secretary of International Relations and Human Rights Committee, and an official of the Archaeology Department, along with district coordinators, participated in the meetings.

The meetings discussed the function and effectiveness of the local Monitoring Committees and evaluated the work they had completed against the goals set. Discussion also focused on progress

made, best practices in different districts, and the lessons learned from each district. Finally, an outline of the next set of actions for each district were drafted in preparation for the second round of community dialogues tentatively scheduled to be held between November and January.

During the meeting of the Monitoring Committee from Surkhet district, participants were given the example of the Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI) as a success story. The FNCCI, in collaboration with the District Administration Office, published 5,000 copies of brochures promoting Surkhet as a tourist destination. These brochures were then distributed at strategic tourist points such as hotels, airports and other tourist sites.

Similarly, the Monitoring Committee from Dhankuta announced another success in plans to build an airport in the district. District parliamentarians have lobbied concerned ministries and departments for the construction of a domestic airport in the district. Dhankuta, a district known for its many tourists attractions, remained underutilized due to lack of infrastructure development.

'Marching Ahead' Women's Profile Book Event

"NDI has been inspiring and helping women leaders to march ahead for a long time and this profile book is an outstanding work towards this mission"

Hon. Pushpa Bhusal (NC)

On July 20, the Institute organized an event in honor of women leaders featured in the Institute's publication *"Marching Ahead: A Profile of Women CA Members"*. The main objective of this publication was to recognize and highlight women leaders who have shown extraordinary leadership in promoting women's issues, contributed to the larger process of democratization; and inspired other women leaders. Thirteen out of 24 parliamentarians featured in the profile book attended

the event. The advisory board members, as well as a team of photographers, also attended the event.

The parliamentarians praised NDI's initiative and expressed their hope that the book would be a source of inspiration to all women leaders and activists across the country. They also praised former NDI Nepal Country Director Dr. Sherrie Wolff, who was present at the event and the entire NDI team for their work in the development of the profile book.

The parliamentarians requested NDI to make additional copies of the profile book available to women leaders at the grassroots level.

Parliamentary Internship Program

Consultation with the Academic Institutions

During this quarter, the team met with the Directors of the Kathmandu School of Law (KSL), the ACE Institute of Management and the Dean of the Nepal Law Campus (NLC) to discuss the Institute's Parliamentary Internship Program. The team shared the concept of its internship program and discussed in detail the various aspects of internships and the prospects of possible

collaboration. The Directors and the Deans of the three institutions expressed their interest and willingness to collaborate with NDI.

C. Meetings/Consultations/Events

Other Meetings/Events

Meeting with the Chief Whips

On July 18 and 21, NDI met with Hon. Laxman Ghimire and Hon. Bhim Acharya, Chief Whips of NC and CPN-UML respectively. The Institute used the opportunity to thank the chief whips for their ongoing support to NDI's program and activities. In addition, the meeting specifically discussed various aspects of the NGPG event scheduled for July 22-23, the proposed effective committee workshop and the parliamentary internship program. NDI briefed the chief whips on the logistics of the NGPG workshop such as the agenda, experts, venue and selection process/criteria of parliamentarians. Both chief whips expressed their interest in NDI's proposed parliamentary internship program and requested NDI to submit a concept paper.

Meeting with Secretary General of Legislature-Parliament Secretariat

On July 25, the parliamentary team met with Mr. Manohar Prasad Bhattarai, Secretary General of the Legislature-Parliament Secretariat. The Institute used the opportunity to thank the Secretary General for his ongoing support of NDI's program activities. In addition, the meeting specifically discussed various aspects of the 'Effective Committee Workshop' scheduled for August 2-3, and requested his participation in the event. NDI briefed him on the logistics of the workshop including the agenda, experts, and the venue.

Meetings with USAID D&G staff

On July 26, an introductory meeting was held at NDI to introduce USAID D&G staff Julie Browning, Acting Democracy and Governance Director, and Ramesh Adhikari, Election, Legislative and Political Processes Specialist. Once certified, Ramesh will be the AOTR for the CEPPS program. Sumitra Manandhar, Acting AOTR, also attended the meeting.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Institute is currently awaiting USAID approval of the Performance Management and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) submitted with the last quarterly report (April-June 2011). From late February until mid-March 2011, the Institute conducted a comprehensive M&E baseline assessment. The objectives of the baseline assessment were to refine the Performance Management and Evaluation Plan (PMEP), establish baseline and target indicator values and develop a framework for midterm and final evaluations. The refined PMEP along with the PMEP Handbook were submitted to USAID last quarter. Meanwhile, the Institute continued working on data collection tools for several planned indicators under each of the political party and parliamentary program components.

IV. RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Objective 1: Political parties more effectively contribute to democratic processes in Nepal.

- The Institute completed two rounds of regional training-of-trainers in Pokhara and Chitwan. Following the training, 103 party activists from nine political parties representing various districts and ethnic groups enhanced their capacity to replicate trainings for their parties in the coming months.
- The Institute successfully completed 12 individual party workshops with nine political parties, which provided their activists with best practices and capacity building in the areas of messaging, targeting, outreach, communication, and internal party candidate selection processes.
- Following the district sub-committee formation in Terathum, forty activists from five political parties received training on leadership development. With the sub-committee formation in Terathum, IPWA has successfully established district sub-committees in sixty nine districts across the country.
- Internews conducted a series of journalism trainings across Nepal for sixty participants. Participants were able to meet to meet with other journalists and members of the community to discuss the importance of investigative journalism in Nepal. By the end of the course, journalists had created their own blog on the internet and gained valuable resources for their stories.

Objective 3: The CA/Legislature Parliament more effectively fulfills its democratic functions.

- First-term parliamentarians formally established the Next Generation Parliamentarians Group (NGPG). The NGPG provides an effective forum for future Nepalese law-makers to be groomed for the roles they will play as parliamentarians.
- Following the community dialogues and round table discussions, the parliamentarians and the district coordinators lobbied concerned ministries and departments in addressing district specific issues.
- TAF conducted interest group audits on eight bills and disseminated the findings and recommendations through the print media and on 25 different FM radio stations across the country.
- More than 2400 people attended TAF's third round town hall meetings in 45 municipalities across the country. Over half of the participants were from marginalized communities of Nepal. TAF partners then submitted the town hall recommendations to members of the Legislative Committee of the Parliament.

V. EVALUATION

This quarter, the Institute successfully completed two rounds of the regional political party training-of-trainers, in Pokhara and Chitwan respectively. The regional training brought together district level activists from nine political parties (UCPN-M, NC, CPN-UML, RPP, TMLP, SP, MJF-N, MJFN- R and CPN-ML). An outstanding feature of the training in both districts was the ease with which all nine political parties interacted with each other. The parties, despite their ideological differences, were willing to listen and work together to strengthen their respective parties. While the UCPN-M have only recently participated in the Institute's programs, they were supportive and actively participated in both events. In both these districts, participants stated that group exercises and practical sessions enabled them to gain more in-depth knowledge of the topics covered. Of note was the fact that participants unanimously liked the module on public speaking, where each participant was provided a minute to address an audience and a video tape of the speech was shown later. Participants then engaged in group critiques, identifying areas where they could improve. Another feature of the regional trainings was the incorporation of master trainers from the national training of trainers held earlier in June to work as co-trainers and gain additional experience.

NDI conducted the 'Effective Committee Workshop' for the committee chairs, members and the senior committee staff, despite their busy schedules of parliamentary business. This provided NDI an opportunity to expand its coordination and relationship with the office holders of different parliamentary committees. This opened doors for both NDI and the committees to cooperate in the future.

This quarter a milestone was achieved with the formal formation of the NGPG. For the first time in Nepal, novice law makers will have a forum where they will be groomed for their duties as they step out in their most important role as representative of their constituents. The 21 NGPG member coordination committee is responsible for all decision making. NDI expects NGPG to remain a formal entity to be replaced by new members of the new parliament after successive elections.

The community dialogues and round table discussion follow-up meetings highlighted the need for the parliamentarians to work on targets identified during the first round of these events in ten districts. While some districts achieved a great deal in terms of lobbying effectively with the concerned ministries and departments, others lagged behind. Following these meetings, however, the parliamentarians realized that time was running out and stated their intentions to achieve their targets before the second round of dialogues.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- IPWA will expand its district committee in the final district and conduct capacity building training for the newly elected women members in that district.
- The Institute identified political party experts and consultants with necessary experience to conduct a series of individual political party workshops and consultations next quarter on key reform issues and priority areas identified by political parties.

- NDI will organize a capacity building training on ‘Parliamentary Procedures’ for NGPG members and other parliamentarians to help enhance their knowledge and skills on presenting themselves effectively in parliamentary business.
- NDI will organize a seminar on deforestation for NGPG members and other parliamentarians to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the issue and solicit recommendations from experts.
- NDI will hold follow-up meetings with various ministries, departments and other public-private stakeholders with involvement of parliamentarians from respective districts on the issues discussed during community dialogues and round table discussions. It is expected that this process will help obtain commitments from concerned agencies to address the district-specific issues at the policy level.
- NDI will organize a pilot public committee hearing in Kathmandu.
- Internews will provide technical and management assistance for the Antenna Foundation and the Federation of Nepalese Journalists in order to continue its radio programs, workshops, media monitoring, and other programs.
- TAF will coordinate with the Secretary General to initiate strategic implementation of the Five-Year Library Improvement Plan, based on the recommendations provided by the research consultant and the funds allocated under CEPPS.
- TAF will operate in accordance to the work plan created by Writing Workshop to complete the Legislative Parliament's media center in the coming quarter. Coordinating with the Parliament Secretariat, it will initiate strategic involvement in providing technical and material assistance as identified by the research consultant and the funds allocated under CEPPS.
- TAF will continue to work with SS, WA, and RCDSC in conducting the next wave of town hall meetings. TAF will evaluate the effectiveness of the current selection of town halls and decided whether or not to make any changes for the following year.
- TAF will continue to work closely with NCF and the interest group in identifying and auditing relevant legislation in the coming quarter. Furthermore, TAF will coordinate with New Spotlight Pvt. Ltd. to ensure a proper dissemination of the findings/recommendations of the interest group audits through the print media.
- TAF will continue to work closely with Interface Nepal in identifying the relevant legislations and provide assistance in producing and broadcasting the weekly radio show.